The Black Cat

September 1908

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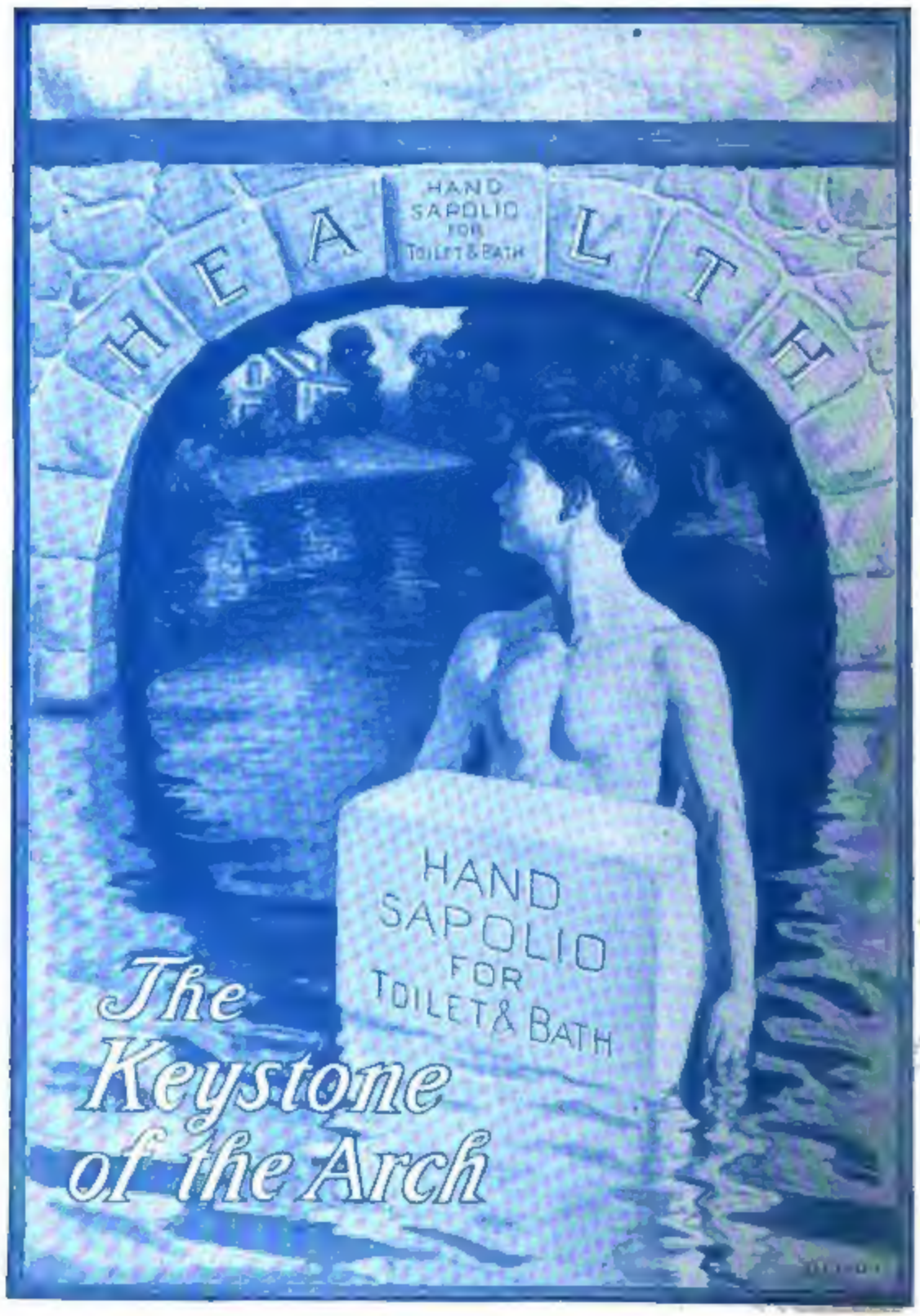

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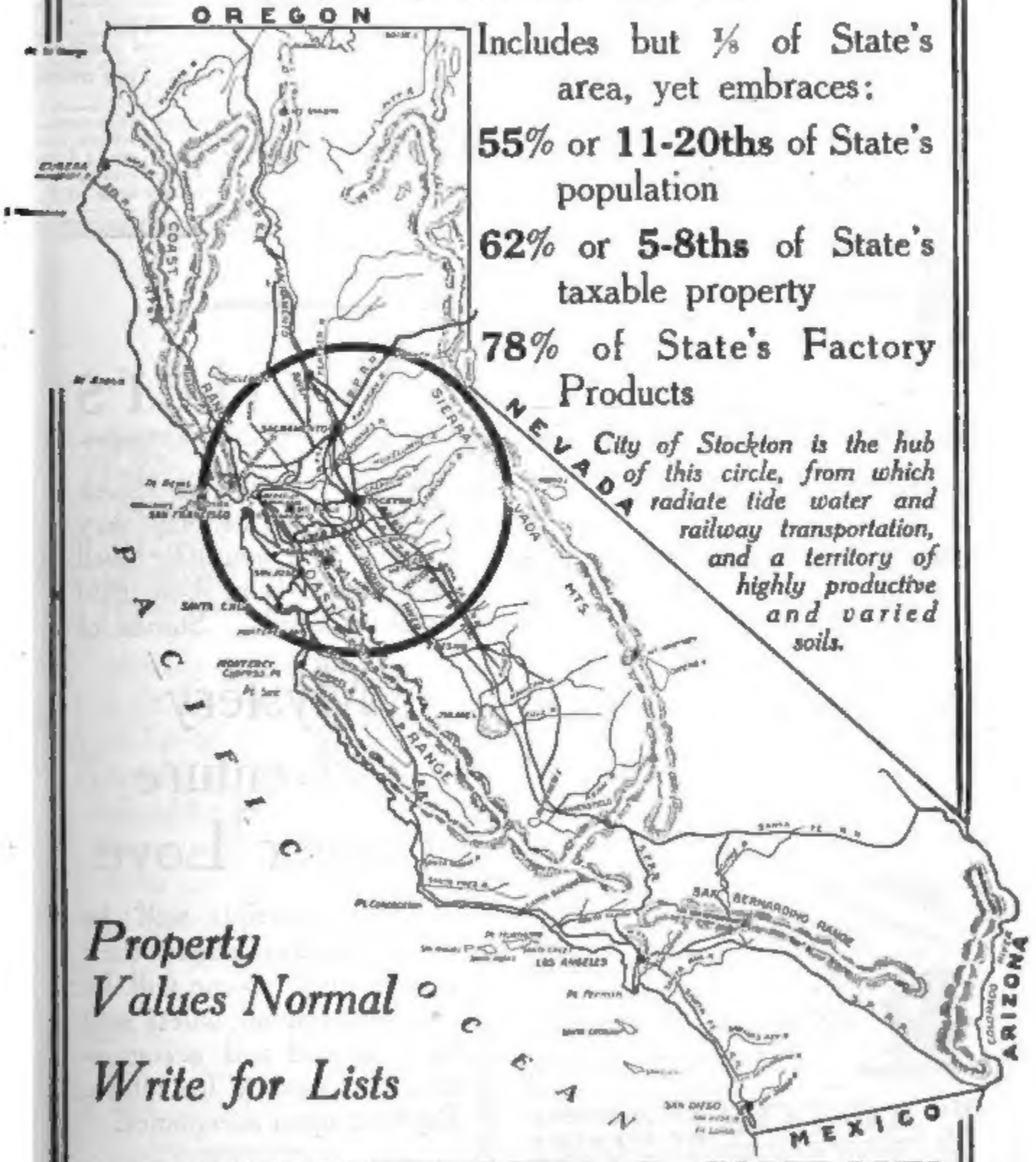

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Professor Joy's Sabbatical.*

BY WALTER TALLMADGE ARNDT.

"DOES any one know where Professor Joy is going to spend his sabbatical year?" Mr. Sargent, one of the assistants in chemistry, asked Dr. Bain as they walked together across the college yard the last lecture day of the second semester.

"No — that's one of the unsolved mysteries of the year," returned Bain, "and as far as I can see it will remain so. It's past our understanding why dear old Joyful, who, as far as we know, has never kept a thing from either Professor Rogers or myself in ten years, should all of a sudden develop such clam-like characteristics. We've hinted and hinted — given him every sort of a chance to unburden himself — but he's appeared to be so set on not saying anything that we've given up for fear of hurting his feelings."

"You know he's going to England, don't you?"

"We don't know anything — we can only guess," answered Dr. Bain. "He has, or had, a twin brother living there — a chemist, too, I believe. He told Professor Rogers that much several years ago. Whether he has any other relatives or not we don't know."

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They stopped for a moment at the Registrar's office, where one of the clerks handed Dr. Bain a long envelope.

"This just came this morning," he said. "If you are going to see Professor Joy you might take it to him."

"Why, certainly," replied Bain, "we're on our way to his lecture room now."

"There's certainly been a big change in him in the last six months," resumed Sargent as they proceeded. "You don't suppose he's going back to England to marry some old sweetheart of his, do you?"

"Marry! Professor Joy marry! Don't think that for a moment. There never lived a more confirmed bachelor. His symptoms aren't those of love-sickness, and besides he isn't the sort of man to nourish a romance for fourteen long years; he hasn't been back to England once in all that time you know."

"Then there's absolutely no clue — no explanation of his dropping off from all his old companionships — giving up his chess and golf and resigning from the Chemical Society?"

"None whatever — unless it's his new hobby."

"His new hobby!"

"Why yes — you know about his taking up pharmacy, don't you?"

"Well, I did think he smelled sort of druggy of late, but I didn't imagine it meant anything."

"It means just this, — that he's been spending all his spare time for six months past reading books on pharmacy and puttering with drugs and medicines in his bedroom till it smells like an apothecary's shop."

"But what on earth — !"

"There you've got me. What on earth is it for? Maybe we'll know when he comes back to college fourteen months from now."

. . . . . .

For five minutes after he had dismissed the class in Chemistry B from the last lecture of the year, Professor Joy sat motionless, staring blankly straight ahead of him. Then he leaned forward till his elbows rested on the desk, and his head slowly sank into his hands, his slender fingers furrowing his thin gray hair. The noise of feet tramping through the hallways and scraping along

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the brick walk outside his windows did not disturb him. Nor did the breeze that scattered and rustled the papers on his desk. It was not till Dr. Bain's cheery "Hello, Professor — sleeping at your post again!" rang out close to his ear, that he raised a rather tired and somewhat ashamed face.

"I — I was just thinking, doctor — that's all," he protested.

"Not of the good times you're going to have during your vacation surely — your face gives you away — I'm afraid you were worrying again. Professor Rogers, and Sargent here, and the rest of us, will all do our best for the department."

"Oh, it's not that, you know," replied Professor Joy, gathering up his papers — "only I'm rather tired — and the relief of having it all over has upset me."

As the three left the building Dr. Bain handed the long envelope to the professor.

"I'd almost forgotten this," he said, watching the elder man narrowly. "It's your passports, I suppose. I noticed the government trade-mark in the corner."

"Yes — yes, to be sure — thank you," returned Professor Joy, placing the envelope in his pocket with scarce a glance at it. But he quickened his pace perceptibly, and when they reached Mrs. Gordon's, where they all dined, he excused himself with the remark that he didn't feel like eating anything and hurried on to his room, two doors farther.

Once indoors he nervously tore open the long envelope and examined its contents. "Yes — yes — it's all right," he exclaimed under his breath, "Everything's here. Let's see!" he began to read from one of the documents. "To Captain A. Toploft, Warden Dornmouth Prison: Admit Professor Robert Joy, a naturalized American citizen, to see prisoner Number 7899 on any days during the month of—' Um-m! Yes, that's apparently all right — countersigned by the Home Secretary." He stood looking at the pass until it was quite a blur before his eyes. "Thank God!" he ejaculated at length with a sigh. He then took from a cupboard a jar of crackers and a round Dutch cheese, and, settling himself in his big arm chair, was soon lost to all else in the perusal of the latest *British Pharmacopoeia*.

. . . . . .

Captain Alexis Toploft, the Warden of Dornmouth Prison, was sitting in his office one morning in mid-July, beaming over a friendly letter he had just received from a successful wheat farmer in Assiniboia who had once spent five years under his care for inability to make his accounts balance, when the guard announced a visitor.

"Show him in," said the captain without looking up.

The visitor stood waiting patiently for some time, until he noticed that the Warden had begun to read the letter all over again. Then he coughed.

"Pardon me, sir, I'd forgotten that you —" As the warden's eyes rested on the slight, nattily dressed man before him, he broke off abruptly and uttered a smothered

"Good Lord!"

"I see you recognize me, sir," said the visitor, with a faint smile.

"Why, certainly, sir — that is, I mean — you must be Mr. Joy's American brother. In fact you couldn't be any one else — you are as like as two bullets — sit down, won't you?"

"Yes — you have guessed correctly," returned the professor as he seated himself. "I am Professor Robert Joy, and I have come here with a special permit from the Home Secretary to see my brother Richard."

"I'm very happy, sir — very happy to know you," returned the captain as he glanced over the permit, "for I don't mind telling you, sir, that I prize your brother's friendship greatly and I'm glad to be of any service to either of you. You see, sir," he went on, returning the permit and wheeling his chair around till he faced his visitor squarely. "Mr. Joy and I have a good deal in common. To begin with, we both came to Dornmouth on the same day, sixteen years ago. The only real difference was in respect to our terms of service — mine was to be during good behaviour or till incapacitated — his for life. Then our both being gentlemen sort of drew us together — for real gentlemen — thank God! — are scarce enough here, sir, either in or outside the bars, so that when they do meet they are naturally attracted. As your brother has often said to me, 'It's what we men of science, speaking of chemical properties, would call chemism.'"

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"Exactly — exactly," assented the professor. Then he asked abruptly:

"When will it be possible for me to see him?"

"I was just coming to that," returned the warden. "The regular visitors' hours are from ten to twelve, but I wouldn't want to put either of you to the unpleasant necessity of meeting in the general reception room. A better plan has just occurred to me. Your brother is the prison apothecary, you know, and that keeps him busy with his prescriptions every afternoon. I myself often visit him while he's at work in the apothecary's room, and I should be glad to take you there this afternoon. Then, of course, you can come again to-morrow — in fact, as often as you like. It's a slight infraction of the rules, but I'll gladly assume the responsibility for your brother's sake. I only wish I could do more."

"I can't thank you sufficiently," exclaimed the professor. The two men rose and grasped hands, standing for a moment without a word.

Seated across the lunch table from one another in Captain Topploft's simple little dining-room, the conversation, after a few formalities, turned to the prisoner. The professor spoke first.

"Does my brother appear to be restless — or is he resigned?" he asked.

"Generally speaking, he is very quiet," replied the warden, "but I don't think he has ever entirely given up hope. Often he says to me, in his plaintive, pleading voice, 'Ah, Captain — if I could only see them again — if I could only finish my work.'"

The professor sipped his claret in silence, and after a moment the captain spoke again.

"I hope you won't think me presumptuous," he said, "if I ask you a few questions about — er — the unhappy circumstance that brought your brother here. I surely need not tell you that I do not speak as an official, but as one who, from sixteen years' close association, is glad to count your brother among his dearest friends and who believes, as truly as you yourself, that he is innocent of the crime of which he was convicted."

"Your assurance is unnecessary, Captain," the professor replied. "But of course you know the main facts of the case."

"Not very much beyond the bare fact that he was convicted of

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poisoning his boyhood friend, the Honorable Cecil Colburton, son of the old Earl of Epham. You see, it all happened in the early eighties, while I was down in South Africa. Then a beastly Boer bullet splintered my knee at Majuba Hill, and it was three months before I was out of the hospital. My appointment to the assistant wardenship at Dormouth caught me as I was convalescing, and brought me back to England. The trial was over then, and he was waiting in Sudsworth Jail to be brought here."

"I will gladly enlighten you in any way I can," said the professor.

The dishes had been cleared away, and the captain, with his elbows on the table, began: —

"It's about the motive that I could never understand — of course I wouldn't ask him. Jealousy — they said it was — didn't they — but there was surely no justification. If there was, why is he still so devoted — and why does she write so faithfully — never missing a week in all these years?"

"No," replied the professor quietly, "I don't think there ever was justification. But as for Richard's jealousy — To be sure he did attack Cecil violently one evening when he met him walking across the meadow with Julianne. It simply showed, it seems to me, the extraordinarily overwrought state of mind which his devotion to his chemical investigations had brought on. And, scarcely a week before, he had attacked me with even greater fury, because I had inadvertently wandered into the grove in which he had erected the little laboratory where he was carrying on his experiments, and had driven me from him with cries of 'Spy! Thief! Traitor!' In the first case they said it showed insane jealousy of his wife's honor, but the second surely showed that his jealousy in guarding the secret of his work was as great, if not greater."

"There is one thing more," said the warden. "I refer to the character of the poison that killed Mr. Colburton. Have you ever reached any conclusion as to what it was?"

"No," was the reply, "that question has never been answered — I doubt if it ever will be. When Richard came to the rectory that night about nine o'clock and announced to Father and I that Cecil was dead in his laboratory I hurried back with him — only half believing it. But Cecil lay on his back near the door in a little

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pool of blood that was oozing from a wound in his head — quite dead. Richard's story of how Cecil came to his death, as related to me then, differed in no important particular from that which he afterwards told in court. Cecil had come to the laboratory in answer to a letter Richard had written him. The letter, which was afterwards found in Cecil's desk at Ephum Castle, explained nothing. Richard's explanation of it was that he wanted to offer him a personal apology for a wrong he had done him, which he would not name, but which we all agreed referred to his accusations regarding Julianne. The prosecution, you remember, made much of this letter, which they held was the means of luring Cecil to his death. Richard's story ran about as follows: Cecil had arrived while he was still at work. He was heating some chemicals in a platinum crucible over a Bunsen burner. It was a critical point in a series of experiments which he hoped would produce important results, and he did not wish to be interrupted. Cecil remarked on the peculiar color of the vapor that rose from the basin, and also on its odor, which Richard himself had noticed without then identifying it. Richard warned him not to stand too near, as the fumes might be dangerous, for he realized that in experimenting with various compounds results are sometimes obtained which one does not look for. A few moments later, while he was searching on his shelves for a particular jar, he heard a little puff, and turned just in time to see Cecil, who had ignored the warning and had leaned over the crucible to watch the peculiar bluish bubbles, stagger back with a short gasp and fall heavily against an iron stand. At the same time a little cloud of vapor arose from the vessel. Surmising what had happened, Richard crammed a cloth to his mouth and nostrils and sprang to a window. As soon as he thought it safe he went to Cecil, believing that he had been only momentarily overcome, but he was already dead. That was the sum of Richard's narration. The cut, which he had not noticed till my arrival, was not sufficient in itself to have caused death. When asked more particularly about his investigations, and the chemicals he was using, he refused to tell anything, declaring that they had nothing to do with the question, and that any explanation he could make would not in the least alter the situation and might give other chemists a suggestion which would enable them to achieve the

solution of the great chemical mystery to which he had determined to dedicate his life."

"Did the materials in the laboratory offer no solution of the problem?"

"None whatever. Before he came for me, Richard — so he acknowledged both to me and on the stand — had carefully cleared up every trace of his work. This action counted heavily against him, for it was held, of course with considerable show of reason, that he did it to cover up traces of his crime. To me it seems clear that he was merely attempting to prevent an investigation by experts from robbing him of years of labor and research. It was a foolish thing to do, but just what any one would have done who was as insanely suspicious of others as Richard. One government chemist declared that from combinations of chemicals in his stock fifty different sorts of poisonous gases might have been generated. The gas that killed Cecil left no distinguishing traces. I could name off-hand a dozen Richard might have procured which would have had the same result. In all this there was nothing that counted so much against Richard as his point blank refusal to give any information concerning his work. Without doubt this refusal was one of the determining factors with the jury."

"It is three o'clock," said Captain Toploft, consulting his watch as they rose, "we shall find him in the drug-room now."

When they entered the room Prisoner 7899 was at work, with his back toward the door. The warden went in first, the professor following tremulously

"Mr. Joy," called Captain Toploft, "I have brought you a visitor." The prisoner turned slowly, and for an instant the brothers stood face to face. Then, with extended hands, they advanced toward one another, the professor with considerable more alacrity than his brother. As he looked on from the door the warden thought, again, as he had before when his eyes first rested on the professor, that he had never seen two people so like in every particular. Both were slender and erect in frame. Their silky hair was of exactly the same shade of gray, they possessed the same almost feminine fineness of complexion, the same clear gray eyes. One who watched them long enough might perhaps have detected an indefinite quality in the attitude or bearing of the professor that

was lacking in the convict; perhaps, too, he would have noted in the latter a momentary drooping of the mouth and an almost imperceptible twitching at the corners of the eyes from which the professor was free.

Richard spoke first.

"Well, Robert — it's taken you some time to find me," he said. There was the bitterness of cynicism in his tone.

Captain Toploft, leaving, shut the door noisily behind him. They were alone.

"I am sorry, Richard."

"She hasn't been here either." The words fell from the lips of the prisoner harshly with a metallic tang.

"Her reason is better than mine"

"As her reason for coming should have been stronger" After a pause he added, "She is my wife."

Professor Joy had for six months thought almost constantly of this meeting. He had looked forward to it as something to be braved. Yet never had his imagination pictured a situation so fraught with pain, so weighted with gloom. The message he had meant to bring was one of light and gladness. Now he felt helpless, and he sought eagerly for an opportunity to begin anew. Perhaps in the bosom of Richard Joy, too, there had been a struggle of conflicting emotions. When he spoke again his voice was softer.

"Sit here, Robert," he said, "where we can talk while I work. Tell me why have you come?"

"I have come from Villacourt," the reply ignored the question

"From Villacourt!" Richard turned quickly, "Julianne's letters made no mention of it."

"We wanted it to be a surprise."

"Is Julianne coming too — and little Antoinette — at last?" The quaver in the speaker's voice could not hide the anxiety in the question.

"No — you are to go to them," returned the professor, speaking low, and so slowly that one might have heard a pin drop between each word.

"To them — I am to go to them — You have obtained —"

"Hush!" The professor raised his finger warningly to his lips.

"No — I haven't obtained a pardon — you are to go — I am to stay here in your place while you are gone."

"You! — the Home Secretary! — has he consented — does Captain Toploft know?"

Richard's hands worked convulsively. His emotion was great. Yet it was plain that he was groping — that he did not yet understand. The professor rose and laid his hand on his brother's shoulder.

"Sit down, Richard," he said tenderly. "Let us talk it over." In a few words he told simply how for ten years it had been the thought nearest his heart to be of some help to his brother. Providing for the simple wants of Julianne and her child had been a pleasure. His ceaseless efforts to secure a pardon, sometimes holding out a ray of hope, had in the end all come to nothing. It was on last Christmas Day that the idea had come to him like an inspiration. The ensuing college year was to be his sabbatical vacation. How could he spend it better than by taking his brother's place in Dormouth and allow him to pass the year with his wife and child in France? The accomplishment seemed easy. In six months he had mastered the principles of pharmacy in order that he might take up his brother's duties satisfactorily. Thus far everything had gone well. Richard's wife and child awaited him at Villacourt. Richard had only to instruct him in the prison routine, and then in a few days — maybe to-morrow — the change could be safely made.

Richard sat with bowed head until he had finished, making no attempt to interrupt him. When he lifted his face to his brother's there were tears in his eyes.

"No, Robert — I cannot do it," he said simply.

"Ah — but, Richard, you have not yourself alone to consider! Think of Julianne and Antoinette."

"Julianne!" Richard's voice hardened. "She has never —" he broke off suddenly. "I have brooded so long over her refusal to come to me that I am not fair to her. In my heart I appreciate her horror at the thought of having Antoinette discover that her father is a convicted criminal. Yet — if I were wrongfully convicted, where would be the harm? If Julianne had the faith in me she should have she would tell our child and instil the same

faith in her. Her neglect to do so almost makes me feel sometimes — awful as the thought is — that I would have been justified in killing Cecil Colburton. No, Robert — it isn't worth the sacrifice it would mean to you."

"Ah, Richard, you are unfair — no, you are unjust to her," returned the professor. "I left her only yesterday. I know how faithful she has been. Antoinette is sixteen — Julianne expected to tell her the whole story soon and bring her to you."

Richard rose.

"I cannot answer — I must think — think," he said. "Come to-morrow," and then catching his brother's hand he crushed it in his own. "Ah, God be praised that I have such a brother — that such a man is my brother."

"Poor Julianne!" murmured the professor as he walked back to his lodgings. "Poor Julianne! — poor Richard! I am willing for their sake — but I fear I must make my appeal to him on another score. Ah, Science! — science! — what crimes — what sacrifices —" Then he smiled brightly and added, "but the end achieved will be the same at any rate."

Richard was walking rapidly to and fro in the prison apothecary's room when his brother called the next afternoon. He wrung the professor's hand vigorously.

"No," he said abruptly, coming to the subject at once before the professor had time to speak. "The situation does not justify such a sacrifice on your part — but your proposal is no less magnificent for all that. The full greatness of it came over me only after you left me last night."

"You must not think of it that way," returned the professor. He spoke rapidly — intensely. "Last night I said you owed it to your wife and daughter to accept my proposal; to-day I emphasize that statement — and, further, I declare that you owe it to the world of science — to humanity at large. My appeal to you now is not as brother to brother, but as one man of science to another. I have had a laboratory built and equipped for you near the cottage at Villacourt. You can return here in a year — when your work is done."

Richard Joy stood with his hands tightly clasped, his head bent, his eyes downcast.

"I could accomplish it in less than a year — in six months maybe," he said. His voice was low and tense. The sentences fell from his lips disconnectedly. "I have tried to induce Captain Toploft to let me fix up a little laboratory here — in this place. He has been good — he has done everything except that — he could not do that. But if I could only finish my work — people would understand then — people would thank me then — the generations to come would call me blessed."

Suddenly he raised his eyes to his brother's.

"Go, Robert — go now," he said — "come again to-morrow — I will tell you then — you are very good — and they would bless you too."

When he left the apothecary's room Professor Joy was in high spirits. He saw the warden before he left the prison.

"I am coming again to-morrow, Captain," he said, gaily, "and then I am going to France, where I expect to spend the coming year, which is my sabbatical vacation, in conducting a series of investigations along lines suggested by my brother."

"Ah, he has awakened your interest in his experiment, then?" exclaimed the warden.

"And I have every reason to believe the experiment will be successful," the professor returned decidedly. There was a sparkle in his eye as of victory already won.

"I wish you every possible success," said Captain Toploft, as they shook hands. The professor returned to his lodgings, where he spent the evening packing his trunk and writing letters, one of which he addressed to Dr. Bain.

. . . . . .

The next evening at the same hour Professor Robert Joy was examining with interest the interior of a little cell in Dornmouth Prison. At the same time Prisoner No. 7899, from the stern of a Channel boat, was watching the white cliffs of Dover disappear in the dusky distance.

The strangeness of his surroundings kept the professor for the first fortnight from feeling the dull monotony of prison life. The simple effort of trying to prevent his acts from betraying him gave him occupation enough at first. The prison surgeon reprimanded him for his unaccustomed slowness in compounding the prescrip-

tions. His unfamiliarity with prison etiquette brought a protest from the prison chef and some other trusties, who had always looked upon the prison apothecary as altogether too privileged anyway for a life convict. His first interview with the warden, which he had most dreaded, came off beautifully, because of the warden's insistence in spending a straight hour in pouring forth the praises of "your brother, the professor." The letters from Julianne, which had not for years been subjected to the ordinary inspection required by the prison rules, brought him every week, with the same regularity that they had brought his brother, an account of the occupants of the little cottage on the outskirts of the village of Villacourt. They told him much that another reading them could not have seen. They spoke of the joy of having "brother Robert" with them. They told of the devotion of the chemist — "notre frere Americain" — to his work in the little laboratory."

So the days passed — and the weeks — and the months. Robert Joy's adaptability, his quick wit, his ingenuity, were put to the test often during the first months to avert discovery. There was much to interest him in the life that went on about him. He was glad of the opportunity it gave him to study an unknown side of human nature. A life devoted to nitrates and sulphates had made him hitherto rather careless of hearts and souls. With the coming of the spring days, however, came other thoughts. He stood long at the grated window of the apothecary's room and looked away over the roofs of the prison buildings to a little grove that grew daily greener. There was freedom, he sighed, and the thought made his heart beat faster. Back at the University they were preparing for the end of the year. He could hear Professor Rogers say, "This course will be conducted by Professor Joy next semester." Julianne's letters were awaited more eagerly more eagerly searched for the news that he found at last. "Your brother thinks he will have his work done by July first," it read.

It was the afternoon of the 27th of June. Professor Joy remembered that it was Commencement Day at home. Till now he had never realized how much he loved the University. He use to patronize it just a bit — for it wasn't Oxford. And he had actually thought it was his work only that he loved — now he felt that his

love was deeper, more comprehensive. The year at Dornmouth had changed him that much. He hummed the college song as he worked. How many times in the days gone by he had frowned when the night air brought the strains of that same song from afar.

The warden entered.

"I have just a moment, Mr. Joy," he began. At once the professor noted something strange in his manner. "I only dropped in to bring you this copy of *The Times*. There's an account of a new scientific discovery in it. Good-bye."

The professor, opening the paper, searched in vain for anything about a scientific discovery. But under the Paris Correspondence the name "Villacourt" caught his eye, and he read:

> The correspondence of *Le Courrieur* reports a curious tragedy at Villacourt. An American college professor, Robert Joy by name, was found dead last night in a little laboratory which he had erected near the cottage of a Madame Joy, believed to be a near relative. Investigation shows that he probably met his death by inhalation of cyanogen, which had been unintentionally generated in the course of an experiment. The Central Police remember that a decade or more ago a chemist named Joy was convicted in England of poisoning by means of some unknown gas a prominent young English politician by the name of Colburton. The coincidence of names and the agent of death in the two cases is interesting, but is not known to be of any importance.

The paper dropped limply from nerveless hands, the reader sank into a chair, and his white fingers met and twined convulsively together in the thin gray locks above the sunken temples. Prisoner No. 7899 sat motionless, pondering vaguely the vanished future of Professor Joy.

The Pond That Went to Sleep.*

BY MARIE BELDEN JAMES.

THE Superintendent stood with the President's telegram in his hand, looking down at the smooth, dark surface of the pond that was in the way. He dropped a little pebble into the water, just to assure himself that it was not a floor of hard dark wood, and he was relieved to see little ripples start, though the curved shapes they took reminded him of the graining on a heavy oaken door. Then he read the yellow message through slowly once more: "Train must be run from Friedland to Essex over prescribed route before 8 tomorrow morning or franchise is forfeited. KNOX."

"What a fool I was," reflected the Superintendent morosely. "Why didn't I go on and bridge over the place instead of writing to Knox that the franchise ought to be changed so we could go around it? Now here I am with all material for a bridge fifty miles off, and the franchise lost if I don't run a train over here in the morning."

He looked at the shining rails that were laid right up to the water's edge on each side, and at the dull, empty surface which divided them. "And the damned pond in the way!" he said out loud.

"Easy on the pond, Boss. It's not so bad after you know it." An old man with wrinkled, smileless face stood at the Superintendent's elbow and watched him with a curious glint in a pair of narrow dark eyes. "We folks are mostly very respectful to this pond," he added. There was a note of cool seriousness in his voice that interested the Superintendent in spite of his trouble.

"Indeed?" he said, "Why?"

"It's haunted," replied the man calmly.

The Superintendent turned away scornfully. "It's a warm

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night," he said, looking at the hot, red sunset sky, "I think I'll be getting home." Then he felt the man looking at him and he turned back impatiently. "Well, how is it haunted?" he asked, annoyed and puzzled with himself for asking.

"We call it, The Pond that Goes to Sleep," said the man, "because they say that in summer — even in weather as hot as this — it sometimes freezes solid. You know it's only three feet deep."

The Superintendent laughed, an unpleasant enough laugh. "Good lie!" he said harshly. "What a pity that it couldn't freeze over tonight. We could lay rails along on the ice in half an hour — and one train over would keep us the franchise."

Again he turned to go, but this time the other stopped him alertly. "Then there *is* danger of your losing it?" he asked.

"It's lost already," replied the Superintendent, scarcely caring what he said, as he realized his trouble. "If a train isn't run across this pond by eight o'clock to-morrow morning, it's all up."

"Oh, that's what they did then!" the man stood looking steadily into nothing for a moment. Then he spoke with a decision that surprised the Superintendent.

"Why don't you drain out the water — it isn't much?" he said, "and lay rails on the bottom?"

"I had thought of that," the railroad man answered, "but it wouldn't do. The water would go right down this hill and flood the back yard of Wilmer, your mayor, and then there'd be the devil to pay. He's been opposed to the railroad all along, and he'd take hold of anything —"

"So he would, — you're right," broke in the man, "Well, I'm not opposed to it. My name is Doyle. I live over there." He pointed to the only house on the hill, a hundred rods distant. "And if I can do anything —"

"You can't, thanks," returned the Superintendent gloomily, "Unless the pond *should* freeze tonight," he added, with a spark of humor? "In that case you might let me know. My name's Revell. I'm boarding at Ans Smith's."

"I'll watch it close," agreed Doyle, solemnly. "And say, if it does freeze, after you've run your train through, will you let me have the ice? That's my ice-house — that big thing up there, and I didn't get it as full as I'd have liked last winter!"

"Oh, sure, sure," said the railroad man abstractedly, and he walked slowly off down the hill, his hands in his pockets and the yellow telegram crumpled in one of them.

When he reached his economical boarding place he found Aus Smith, fatter and consequently hotter than other people, sitting fanning himself on the steps. Revell, drawn by a desire to escape from his own thoughts, spoke to him.

"What do they call that pond up there by the railroad?" he asked idly, resting one foot on the lowest step."

"Why — they do call it the pond that goes to sleep," replied Aus and stopped overheating himself with the violent exertion attendant upon moving a palm leaf fan, "though that ain't its real name. They call it that because there's a story that it'll freeze any time, winter or summer, and some fool said that it only got tired and went to sleep. But nobody believes it," he ended, and began fanning again, convinced that he had given his boarder enough conversation for the price he paid.

That night was even hotter than the hot sunlit day had been. Revell tossed in bed, and then the broad stripes on the wall paper came to look too much like endless parallel rails, and he got up and sat by the window. It was bad enough there. The moonlight seemed to lie in straight, shiny lines along the path, and though no breeze moved, the shadows of the trees wavered on the moon white earth and grew, moment by moment, like rows of men bending over with pickaxes, laying ties, spiking rails.

Presently one of them stepped out and stood under the Superintendent's window. It was Doyle.

"Say, boss," he remarked in the quiet tone Revell had first heard him use, "It's your chance. The pond has gone to sleep."

At first Revell thought the man must be sun struck or moonstruck, or just ordinarily crazy, but he put on his clothes and went out with him, because it seemed just as well to do that as to sit there in the heat thinking until he was crazy himself. When he came down Doyle made him hurry in spite of the heat, and showed him a short cut through the woods.

From a distance, as they came out of the trees at the top of the hill the pond looked just as usual to Revell, black and glassy, and he felt a sudden sickening feeling come over him, for he had

hoped without knowing. Then as they drew nearer, the water began to look white and queer, and presently Revell began to run.

In the white moonlight, under the shadow of half a dozen trees, Revell knelt between the shiny rails at the edge of the pond and laid his hand on cold, white, solid ice. When Doyle came up the Superintendent was standing on it, stamping his feet exultantly. It did not crack under him.

They went racing like boys down to the workmen's boarding house at the foot of the hill and roused the men. They brought the tools and spikes from the locked tool house. With their own hands they carried the rails to the top of the hill. And they helped make up the train of their only engine and two work cars. An hour later they did the best of the cheering as the little train struggled across the extemporaneous, melting bridge, and puffed comfortably away down the long track on the other side.

But in the cheering the men with the picks and spikes were not far behind. Though most of them had been born in the village and had believed the superstition of the pond all their days, it had astonished them to see the ice actually frozen with the thermometer at 85 degrees, but when they saw the railroad they had worked on so long saved by it, they postponed their surprise and gave the best of their energy to rejoicing.

It must have been their voices that waked the mayor in his house below the hill. For, as the last white puff of smoke came back from the vanishing train, he was among them, anger in his eye and mouth. Several other citizens had come too, and they listened to him. Doyle listened. And Revell listened a little. The mayor was not a mild man.

"All the water," he declared angrily, "out of your damned old pond has leaked down and flooded my back yard — flooded it. I'll What in hell's this?" For, suddenly, he saw the melting ice, the new line of track and traces of the departed train.

"We've just been saving our franchise, Mr. Mayor," said Revell quietly and exultantly.

"Saving blue blazes!" shouted the mayor, "You've drawn off all the water and flooded my house. I'll fix your franchise. I'll — What's that? Ice?"

"Yes, sir, ice," Doyle suddenly stepped to the front, and the

look he gave the mayor told the story of a hate better than the author of the four-hundred-page novel by that name ever dreamed of doing. "The pond, you see," his voice grew very low and gentle, and quite unexpectedly his smileless face smiled, "The pond, sir, went to sleep."

Day was just beginning to break. The mayor's glance met Doyle's straight. Then he quieted and looked around him,—perceived the tired, white, happy faces of the men, the hot, heavy air, at his feet the melting ice, and before him Doyle, standing, smiling gently.

"Well, I'm damned!" said the mayor, and turning, walked down the hill.

He meant that he was beaten and Doyle knew it. Whether anyone else did or not was no matter.

After the men were all gone, Doyle and the Superintendent still stood by the pond that had gone to sleep.

"Well," said Revell, laughing, "You'd better get your machine and go to cutting the ice, Doyle. You know I said you could have it for your ice-house. Though the Lord only knows how it got here, I can't believe it really froze," he ended.

Doyle took up a pick, stepped down on the ice, scraped away the slush, and showed the railroad man some deep, rectangular cracks:

"I think I *will* get my wagon and cart it *back* to my ice-house. I brought it last night, after I'd drawn the water off the pond and drowned out our respected mayor."

He stood looking at the Superintendent and the Superintendent stood looking at him.

"The mayor was opposed to the railroad," said Doyle, quietly, "I *wasn't*."

They both smiled. Then they shook hands. And a little later Revell walked down to the station and telegraphed to the president: "Train crossed line at 4 this A. M. Franchise saved. REVELL."

The Little Tin Box.*

BY JAMES FRANCIS DWYER.

ORGAN, foreman of the Hudson-Gerard Construction Company, swinging on a narrow plank four hundred feet above the sidewalk, whistled a lively tune as he glanced around at the unclothed ribs of the giant sky-scraper he was throwing heavenwards. Far below, human ants looked up through the clear air at the gaunt skeleton, their white, upturned faces, round and featureless, reminding the foreman of full blown flowers on bulky stalks.

The watchers attracted Morgan Sitting down on the plank, with legs dangling in space, he stared into the stone-walled canyon up and down which the human current flowed unceasing. The peculiar, weird expectancy which seemed to chain the little groups watching the aerial workers interested him. He had never looked at the crowds before, but some absurd analytical kink had just manifested itself in his mind, and he gratified it. He tried to understand the fascination which held men motionless hour after hour till their aching necks rebelled at the torture. Unconsciously, a hate of the crowd welled up within the foreman. He felt that they were waiting for something to happen. The motionless groups were uncanny. He noted those who stopped only for a moment, hurrying away with quick, upward glances, as if fearful lest the disaster pictured by their imagination might take place before they could shut out the nerve-tingling scene Others stopped, backed carefully out of the current, and, shouldering the wall, settled down for prolonged spells of keen watching.

The foreman started to reason quietly to himself. "There's no fascination in seeing men work," he murmured, "so it's the fascination of seeing men in danger. Increase the danger, and you increase the spine-tickles that keep those loafers peeping upwards.

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Where does it end? I honestly believe that a percentage of those dough-faced galoots stand for hours on the chance of seeing one of us do a toboggan slide through the ether. That's all they're waiting for, damn 'em."

In some peculiar manner the expressed conclusion pulled into his conscious mind the image of Johnson, who was known on the job as "Gerard's Pet." Morgan sat wondering a moment, then laughed queerly. From the pocket of his jacket he took a small, tin box about two inches square, and sniffed at its contents.

"If Johnson has been chewing this stuff long I guess he'll give those sun-gapers a sensation one of these days," he muttered. "Old Gerard's Pet, eh? Nerves on the blink! Carries his little box of nerve dope round with him! The foxy Johnson! What the hell does he want up in the clouds?"

Again he stared down into the tremendous abyss as if he expected an answer to his question to drift up with the faint, ghostly sounds of the heavy traffic. He noticed that the little groups were increasing, and he looked for a reason. There was nothing unusual happening, but the mesh of iron and steel seemed to attract pedestrians.

Presently Morgan laughed uneasily. "Damn 'em," he cried, "I believe they're watching me. They are, sure. I'm in it! 'Gerard's Pet' watching me on top and the crowd watching me below!"

He shook his fist at the spectators, stood up on the plank and climbed cautiously along it.

"Watching me," he muttered, "the damn buzzards! They're hungry for a tragedy. If they watch Johnson — Johnson minus his little, tin box — they might get a run. At any rate I'm going to watch him now. He must have lost that at lunch time, and if he's been chewing it regular I guess the loss of it will begin to upset his grit before the day is out."

Crawling carefully along the narrow bridge, he climbed into the cobweb of steel beams and looked back at the crowd from a position of comparative safety.

"The dough faced loafers," he murmured, "it's funny I never thought till to-day what kept 'em watching and watching."

Wondering how he had overlooked this powerful incentive to the

morbid minded, he stepped cautiously along the brink of shadowy abysses that lay between the tremendous girders, and as he walked he muttered continually:

"'Gerard's Pet', eh? Put up to watch me, and has to chew a morsel of opium to keep his nerve up. Guess he's craving a pick-me-up now."

At the southern end of the gigantic frame, which towered, black and ugly, over the surrounding buildings, he stopped and peered around. Johnson was standing upon a great triangle of steel, directing half a dozen men who were climbing along the iron threads where the wind, after miling them with occasional moments of calm, attacked them with fierce, strong gusts in their moments of unpreparedness.

Morgan stepped out on the triangle and stood near "The Pet," but Johnson gave no indication that he was aware of his presence. The foreman's animus was ill-concealed and the other was a hyper-sensitive person. The hammers clanged ceaselessly and the skeleton thrilled under the blows. Away out on the bay the robes of the goddess were embroidered with gold as the sun sank lower. The puffing steamers appeared to be sailing immediately beneath, and Morgan's eyes passed over Johnson and studied the scene. The foreman was in a meditative mood, and it was mainly because these moods were increasing lately that "The Pet" had been put on the job.

Johnson was a slight, nervous man, with shifty eyes. Morgan's contemptuous silence irritated him. Standing with his back turned, he felt the gaze of the foreman playing over him like a searchlight. He felt it on his head, on the back of his neck, even on his hands. Suddenly he turned quickly to find Morgan looking over towards Europe.

Johnson moistened his lips and stammered violently as he moved the men along. "The Pet's" left hand strayed upwards, but when it had reached his pocket it was suddenly jerked back to his side. Three times the hand tried to forage in the pocket, and three times it was jerked away. Johnson's mind was certain that the tin box was lost, but Johnson's nerves, tautened by the presence of the silent foreman, urged the twitching fingers to continue the search.

Presently Morgan laughed and Johnson looked at him inquiringly.

"I was just thinking of those infernal watchers down there on the sidewalk," explained the foreman. "I never knew till to-day what keeps 'em there."

"And what does keep them there?" asked Johnson.

"Why, they're waiting to see one of us flop," replied the discoverer, "just hanging 'round thinking one of us will lose his nerve and take a header."

Johnson wrinkled his face into a sickly smile and again moistened his dry lips. Morgan had timed his visit well.

"I don't think that is the reason," he stammered, "they're interested in the work."

The foreman laughed contemptuously. "I know 'em," he cried, "I've been studying them to-day."

Again the foraging hand crept upward, and again it was jerked swiftly back. Its owner made an attempt to change the subject.

"Farley sent down a note about that iron," he spluttered, "he wants you —"

"Look," interrupted Morgan, "just look how they're lining up down there. What for, I would like to know? There's nothing particular doing — what are they staring at?"

Johnson didn't look. He stared out across the bay.

"Not there," snapped the foreman. "Right beneath you, man. Down under your feet. They're cursed ghouls."

"The Pet" moved back a few inches from the extreme apex of the triangle. He turned his face to Morgan and the gray eyes of the student of crowds noted his livid cheeks.

"Move along," muttered Johnson. "I'm going in."

Morgan didn't move. "Crowd unnerve you?" he sneered.

"No," snapped "The Pet."

"What's up, then?"

"Nothing."

"I thought your nerves were going back on you," grinned the foreman.

Johnson's left hand was foraging blindly in his jacket pocket.

"You think too much," he stammered. "Move a little."

"Just oblige me by going 'round the other way," murmured

Morgan. "I've got my eye on a batch of hungry buzzards down there and I don't want to lose sight of them."

Johnson turned towards the apex and moved a few paces cautiously.

"I knew a man," remarked the foreman, critically eyeing the other, "whose nerves went on the blink at this game. He took to drugs."

"Yes," muttered Johnson, half turning to look at the speaker.

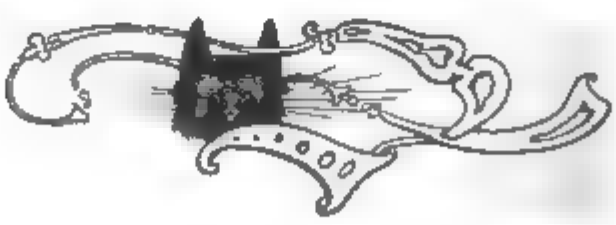
"Yes," repeated Morgan, "he took to opium, or some stuff like it, and the crowd got a sensation one day. He forgot his box or lost it or something — "

"The Pet" wheeled swiftly. "You hound," he snarled. "You -you took it."

The foreman grinned. "Don't upset yourself," he murmured, "Your nerves are rocky, sure."

"Give it up," shrieked Johnson. "Give it up!"

Morgan took the little tin box from his pocket and tossed it towards the other. They were but a few feet apart, but at that moment a sudden gust of wind whirled up from the bay and the box was swept to the left of the narrow bridge. Johnson tried to keep his arm at his side, but the effort was beyond him. It leapt out after the bit of tin, which flashed in the sunlight, and losing his balance, he sprawled forward along the girder. Morgan tried to backstep quickly, but Johnson's right arm swung like a band of iron around his ankles and, locked together, they followed the little tin box.



The Failure of the Bell Exchange.*

BY A. D. McMILLAN.

E drifted into camp one evening about sunset, and if you could go anything on croppings, he seemed to be about the saddest outfit in the hills. His dog was too low-spirited to chase a jack-rabbit, while the lone burro that acted in the capacity of transportation department, might have posed as "Hope Deferred." We had been watching him for half an hour plowing along through the sand, and the Kid had summed up the lay-out as a Greaser outfit somewhat to the bad; and when they drew nearer, and a few gutteral *Caramba*s came floating up the trail, we concluded that the surmise was correct.

"He's a Greaser all right," said the Kid, and when the expedition halted in front of the cabin, he dug up a little of his choicest Spanish and shot it at the stranger real hospitable.

But the stranger only shook his head. "Don't savvy the language, Mister I've been living in an atmosphere of frijoles and tortillas for the last ten years, and all I could accumulate of their beautiful lingo was a half dozen cuss words, which I find very handy in communicating with burros. I picked up their other accomplishments — laziness, and a decided antipathy to soap and water — but their language — well, I just couldn't tongue it, that's all. And when it comes to punching burros you discover the true beauties of pure Castillian. English may be all right for automobiling, but to get the high speed limit out of a burro, you'll find that Spanish, with *piquanti* trimmings does the turn. Now you wouldn't think," continued the stranger, waving his hand toward the burro, "that Jennie Lind there knew the difference between Spanish and English, but she does. Give her English and she'll balk at a measure of barley; *uno poquito de Castellano* and she'll skim the hills like a turkey buzzard."

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That is the way Watkins introduced himself. In honor of the occasion the Kid opened up an extra can of tomatoes, tossed the dog a ham bone, gave Jennie Lind some bacon-rind and sour flapjacks, and the angel of peace just folded her wings over our poor habitation as though she intended to take out naturalization papers and remain in the district. After supper we smoked cigarettes for awhile, and then Watkins got his can-opener to work on the following yarn:

"Been prospecting over in the Sunset Range for the last six months with a Peruvian named Enriques — object, a grub-stake to gopher after a treasure-trove in the Andes of Peru. Treasure-troves, pirate hoards and hidden mines are so numerous of late, that they refuse to thrill any longer, but somehow I believed Enriques. He showed me a map that had been handed down for several generations in his family — a legacy of disappointment, as it were — passed from father to son. Well, for years the Enriques family have been delving for the source of the Incas' wealth, and this member, my late partner, uncovered it. He took out a million or so, then corked it up and went into politics; so you see it is no myth of the hills, but a reality. Fortunately for me, Enriques, the only surviving member of his family, proved to be a prodigious failure in politics — the natural fate of an honest man — and was forced to leave the country. Two years ago he sneaked back just to see how things were looking and found his little mint covered up by a land slide. He drifted back to the States, and we hit the hills for a grub-stake, and just as we had struck a rich little pocket, he died, leaving me the sole possessor of the great secret."

Watkins hobbled his yarn long enough to go over and interview his saddle-bags, then blazed away with the other barrel.

"Here is a map," he said, "and here is a thirty-pound sack of gold-dust to put the expedition through. Now I'm not stuck on the general run of humanity, unless it be of the feminine gender, but somehow you two hit me dead centre. The Kid speaks Spanish like a native, and you are both miners, so if you want to take a third interest each in an expedition where I pay all expenses and we share equally, all right; if not — "

The Kid looked at me wistfully and I nodded approval. "Yours truly," said Watkins. "In twelve months we will be buy-

ing 'Rocky chaps' by the score and U. S. mints by the gross."

And the trouble started in Ariquipa. We had been traveling first-class from San Francisco — wine for dinner and a clean white shirt every morning. Watkins and I could handle the convivial part of the program all right — damn the waiters as though we had been accustomed to that sort of luxury all our lives — but when it came to evening dress and white shirts, we couldn't deceive a small child.

"When it comes to frills," remarked Watkins, "I'll cheerfully pass the deal, for the moment a linen collar gets to prodding me under the ears, I feel like a six-bit burro under a seventy-five-dollar saddle. I can eat pie with a fork as fast as the speediest of them, but when I find a pair of eyes focussed on my shirt front, I'm ashamed to look the waiter in the face. If I could only carry it off like the Kid there — say, he must have had a nurse girl or a butler in his family at some time, for he is as much at home with a napkin and cut-glass, as I am with a demijohn and tin plate."

And the Kid was surely having the time of his life. He mingled with the cabin passengers as though he owned the boat, and while Watkins and I got the marble heart, served on ice, the Kid harvested sunny smiles and tropical greetings. Unfortunately, we got acquainted with a pretty speedy lot of young Englishmen from Ariquipa, and when we landed in that burgh, nothing would do but we must meet a few of the best of their friends at the Club. Their sole idea of hospitality to invited guests seemed to be the game of poker, first, last and all the time, and the first night we were with them we played until morning, breaking about even.

"Might as well gather in a few of their loose thousands," suggested Watkins. So we started the gathering, and at the end of the week we had lost every cent of our grubstake besides floating I. O. U.'s enough to paper their old club-room. We did some powerful rangy thinking for a day or two, but it didn't bother the Kid for a second. While Watkins and I were damning our luck in some secluded corner of the park, the Kid would be off to a dinner party.

"Talk about taking things philosophically," remarked Watkins, "why, it would take something as wet and as copious as the original flood to dampen that Kid's buoyancy."

We had about a week of this sort of thing — the Kid doing all

the promenading while we hugged the shadows — then one day, a perfect stranger butted into the game. Watkins and I were, as usual, in the park, dodging those I. O. U.'s when Señor Don Alexandro Something-or-other introduced himself in Spanish. We shook our heads, and Señor Alexandro opened up in spavined English. He had a scheme on hand which required some very delicate manipulation — in fact, was a little too heavy for the ordinary native intellect — so he had come to ask the shrewd Americanos to furnish the brain sinews to carry out the deal.

No use talking, it sounded all right, although the Don bit old Mother English hard when she was flat on her back and positively refused to break fair in the clinches. No matter if a man does sand-bag your mother-tongue while lost in admiration of your intellectual bumps, it is still a pretty fair language. The Don's English was wild and picturesque in spots, but, like a lime light, it illuminated our dome pieces, so we forgave him and listened. We accompanied him to his apartments, and, over a quart bottle of brandy and a siphon of soda, he unfolded the plot.

It appeared that in early days one of the fathers of the church, being short of every metal but gold and silver, had run a lot of the precious into a great church bell, which for centuries had been wasting its sweet music in the wilds of the Andes, until our friend, Señor Alexandro, had borrowed a small chip from the bell and had it assayed. The bell weighed about 200 pounds and assayed 90 per cent. gold and 10 per cent. silver. The plot was to exchange bells when the natives were not looking. Señor Alexandro had the base metal all ready, and all we were expected to do was to execute the exchange.

It sounded very sweet and feasible, mixed with brandy and soda and the Don's vulcanized English, and when we let the Kid in on the plot it just tickled him to death to think that we had traveled some three thousand miles to shop-lift a church bell. Nobody said anything about compunctions of conscience in regard to the affair, so Watkins sat down and did a little figuring on the deal, and this is the way it looked on paper:

180 lbs. of gold at $200 per lb. .	$36,000
20 lbs of silver at $6 per lb.	120
Total . .	$36,120

"Call it an even $36,000," said Watkins, "and we'll donate the silver to the conscience fund of the church. Half of that $18,000 — belongs to us, so you see we'll be able to give the Incas' treasure trove a good wrestle yet."

We shipped the spurious bell to Santa Rosa by rail, and from there it was mule-back to destination. We traveled by night and kept shady by day, for we wished to keep the affair as quiet as possible. One of our mules was loaded with provisions, so we lived well, and didn't have to stop at any of the towns en route. Señor Alexandro stayed right with us until we reached the village where the exchange was to take place. We camped about a mile from the town, and that night we heard the sweet tones of the famous bell for the first time. Speaking of music, that certainly was a symphony to us. It may have been our imaginations, but somehow the clear, sweet, 90-per-cent-gold tones that came floating into camp, brought with them every description of violet-scented reverie. Watkins' dreams did a hot foot toward autos, wine suppers and white shirts, the Kid's thoughts ran to pink teas and other aristocratic pastimes, while Señor Alexandro and I sat in the gloaming and opened our hearts to each other on the beauties of stock ranges, coffee plantations and bank accounts.

Well, we spent a very pleasant evening, and about ten o'clock Señor Don left camp to reconnoiter while we remained behind and talked things over.

"I would like to hear that bell chiming in our own back yard," remarked the Kid, coming out of his trance, "for I wouldn't trust that Greaser with a plugged nickel. It is all very well telling us about the religious scruples of his countrymen, but he could get any number of them who would steal bell, steeple, church and churchyard, if he wanted them. I became suspicious of him when he wanted no one in the deal who could speak Spanish.

"Oh, that's all right," said Watkins, "he imagines if we can't speak Spanish we are not so apt to get communicative with the natives and give the plot away. He's a foxy Greaser, all right, but once we land the bell it will be a tropical joke on us if we don't get our half of the proceeds."

"If we don't," said the Kid, "I'll make it the objective point of my brief existence to hunt up Mr. Señor Don and see if his blood

runs red or yellow. I'm not out here stealing church bells for my morals."

And, although the Kid looked and felt well in a dress suit, he had nerve to rent. I saw him piloting a pretty little Cherub through the intricacies of a cotillion — bowing and scraping — and to see him going through the willowy, billowy, one would never imagine that he had once run the Champion Gun-man out of the Sunset Range with a pick handle. The Kid might be a heliotrope-scented swell in the ball-room, but when it came to roughing it, he could throw his face into the kinks of a sand-storm and outpoint a cactus for toughness.

We waited somewhat impatiently while the Señor was foraging for information. At eleven we began to get a little uneasy, and at twelve we had about concluded to take a look at the church steeple by moonlight on our own account. Just then we heard quite a commotion in the direction of the village, but after a little things quieted down. After waiting some little time we heard footsteps coming down the trail.

"Here he comes now" said Watkins, taking his place at the smothered camp fire, "and I suppose the Bell Exchange will be open for the transaction of business in about an hour"

But the Bell Exchange never opened for business. Instead of Señor Don Alexandro's greasy profile looming into view, a hundred or so of the natives burst upon the scene, and we were promptly smothered under several tons of somewhat rancid-smelling humanity.

The Kid got a blow on the head from a machete, Watkins' nose was spread over his face most artistically, and if my features looked as they felt, I must have presented a horrible appearance. The little Priest and the Gobernador ranged us up and took a good look at us by the light of the camp fire, which one of the natives had coaxed into a blaze, and I must admit that the company known as the High Fore-headed Ensemblee of Yankee Bell Ringers seemed to be decidedly out of tune.

They brought our possessions out for inspection, and when they uncovered the bell they set up an anthem in mixed voices that must have loosened some of the snow-capped peaks in the immediate vicinity. Then the Gobernador handed down his opinion of the

case. He called us villains, robbers, brigands, petty larceny scoundrels and grand larceny free-booters for a good half hour, and ended by calling upon the little Priest to excommunicate us on the spot, and if that little Father wasn't an orator in that line of goods, I never heard one.

"I've slept through a good many sermons," Watkins afterwards said to me, "but when that little expounder of divine injunctions informed the congregation that he thought us fully capable of stealing the Lord's supper along with consecrated church bells, he held my undivided attention to the very last word."

After the Priest the voice of the people was heard, solo and in chorus. They called us everything, from pigs to imported salt-pork and bacon, and the indignation of one little native overflowed to the extent of attempting to slap the Kid's face for laughing at him. Unfortunately for that native, they had neglected to bind the Kid's feet, and he promptly kicked the native into the blazing camp fire and jumped on him. In retaliation for this outrage they gave us another general mauling and then marched us to the village with music by the captured church bell. When we reached the town we had to run the gauntlet of the women and children, and in justice to the fair ones I will say that none of them stuttered perceptibly in their speeches of welcome to the illustrious strangers. The procession wound up at the calaboose, a very crude and uncomfortable habitation, even for South American architecture, but it seemed like Home, Sweet Home to me. After we had untangled ourselves we held a council of war, for if one could judge anything by general appearances things certainly looked like war.

"That damned Grenser has put a dent in my self-esteem that I'll never be able to smooth out," remarked the Kid after we had inspected our new quarters and found ourselves hopelessly entrapped. "I thought all along that we were treasuring a gold-brick when he was regaling us with that Spanish bell chime, and now there isn't a burro in all this broad land of burros who couldn't match his intellect against ours with fair chances of winning out."

"I don't quite understand it yet," said Watkins, thoughtfully "I know we have been buncoed, but I can't wool the particulars."

"Well," replied the Kid, "it is just this way: While we were waiting for the return of Señor Don, he and his partner stole the

bell and got away with it, then his partner gave the alarm and put the natives on our trail. They discover us with the goods, and there you are. While we are languishing here in jail Señor Don Alexandro is probably engaged in moulding the bell into bricks for easy transportation, and smiling to himself—Oh, how he must smile to himself! We were brought along solely to entertain the natives while he got out of the country with the plunder."

Well, they rang that bell throughout the long night, and the next morning the Gobernador, Priest and villagers waited upon us en masse, and to make sure that we would understand all the good things they had in store for us, they brought along a young lady who spoke English, and who was to act as interpreter. The Gobernador promised us all kinds of hell in this world, while the little Priest assured us that he would see to it that the same treatment would be continued in the world to come. It was all very edifying, but when the little black-eyed interpreter started in to translate, it came near finishing us. She not only carved every word before releasing it, but also hand-painted a great many of them.

"Señores Americanos," she began, dispassionately, "you steal ze bell; Ah! ze church bell. Why for you steal ze bell? Zere is no so great sin as to steal ze church bell. Why for you no steal ze sheep, ze cow or ze burro? You can eat him, but ze church bell Por Dios! you no can eat him—he is for ze music. Ze Gobernador, he send you to ze prison—ze calaboose—and when you die, ze good Padre, he send you to Inferno. Caramba! but ze Americanos—ze puercos who steal ze church bell, has ze hot time in ze old town—comprende?"

This was a little too much for Watkins. He broke into a great haw, haw! and slapped a dignified native in a dirty poncho, so violently on the back, that the native swallowed a cigarette which he happened to be smoking at the time. Of course this act on the part of Watkins started a small-sized riot, in the midst of which the Kid snatched a rifle from one of the guards and let go a shot through the roof. In ten seconds we had that jail to ourselves. The little Priest was the last to leave, and we thought he intended to remain as our spiritual advisor, but he merely held back to cover the retreat of his frightened flock. As he passed out he made an attempt to close the door, but the Kid thoughtfully inserted the butt

end of the rifle in the jamb. Then the little divine put his back against the door and tried to keep us in by main strength, while shouting lustily for assistance. He had plenty of grit but was a trifle shy on avoirdupois, so when we pushed the door open and stepped out into the sunlight, the doughty little chap picked himself up and walked off disgusted, after passing us a few hot ones of the Hell-fire and brimstone brand

The Kid was for making a break and trusting to luck to get away, but while we were deliberating we noticed the muzzles of several rifles protruding from different windows in the neighborhood, so we stepped back under cover. Ten minutes later who should come marching across the plaza but our little interpreter, flying a tiny white handkerchief as a flag of truce. Watkins grinned like an idiot in anticipation of another chapter of pied English, but the Kid seemed to be fascinated by the dauntless bit of femininity who walked with the dignity of a queen, and looked every inch an empress. She walked right up to the jail door with black eyes flashing, and head thrown well back on her shoulders, and opened the engagement at five paces.

"Ze Gobernador, he sends by me his compliments for ze Merry Christmas and ze Happy New Year, also would ze gentlemen who have steal ze church bell please for to capitulate."

"One moment;" said the Kid, bowing like a diplomat, "why were we molested last night, and imprisoned in this vile hole? We have injured none of your people, neither have we stolen your church bell. We came here with a countryman of yours who said he was going to present his native village with a bell--we brought the bell from Arequipa, remember,—and if any one stole your bell, he did it. I'll admit that circumstances are against us,—but would the señorita believe that we would commit such a sin?"

The Kid bowed his best, and the señorita smiled, showing her pretty teeth, and blushing her rosy cheeks into a deeper shade of crimson. Then she shook her head sorrowfully, while her dark eyes flashed with the Simon-pure brand of feminine indignation.

"I believe ze Señor;" she said, impulsively, "and will tell ze Gobernador zat he is ze great insane, caramba! he is ze great brute to believe his eyes when he see zem. I would believe ze Señor — ze gentleman Americano — if I know he tell ze he!"

Very daintily she gave her hand to the Kid, who kissed the little fingers like a courtier, then with a slight bow to each of us she retired. In half an hour she was back again with white linen bandages for the Kid's head and cigarettes and tortillas for all of us. She had spoken to the Gobernador, and if we would deliver the rifle and follow her she would conduct us to the Hall of Justice, where we could prove our innocence and regain our liberty.

The Kid passed the rifle to her without a moment's hesitation, and we all followed her to that celebrated Hall of Justice. The moment the Gobernador and his natives saw that we were unarmed they actually clubbed each other to get a whack at us. We fought, bit, kicked and gouged but all to no purpose, for they simply inundated us, and if it hadn't been for the little Priest they would have been kicking us yet. As it was, each of us had several ribs straightened out before the little chap could cuff his way to our rescue and read his countrymen a lecture on international courtesies governing the conduct of belligerents. Then they bound us hand and foot, chucked us in the calaboose and placed a double guard at the door

"Well, I'll be damned!" remarked Watkins, coughing up a part of a 'dobe brick, which a native had crushed on his features; "if this isn't a country for your whiskers. My confidence in human nature has received a compound fracture, and if anybody ever mentions Greaser to me again — either male or female — I'll get skeptical some *pronto*. Now, who would have thought that pretty little angel would deliberately lead us into a mess like this?"

"If you insinuate," said the Kid, "that the Angel deliberately betrayed us, I'll ram my boot down your throat, for I think I can reach your face if I stretch a little. No, sir! the Angel is the only friend we have in this neck of the woods, although the little Priest did the magnificent, too, and if ever I have the opportunity of dropping a four-bit piece into his contribution box, I'll do it without a single regret. But say! the way those fellows bound us is a revelation to me. It's some kind of a barro hitch, and quite appropriate, so far as I can butt into the main channel of facts. Oh! but we are a constellation of bright ones, we are! Those Englishmen in Ariquipa skinned us to a finish and at the same time they were feeding us all that brain pap. 'Such deneed long-headed chaps,

don't ye know' and all that. Why, blast me bloomin' blinkers, we haven't the sense nature allows geese. Then that Greaser Oh, I say! there must be considerable fiction about this brainy American business we have been circulating about ourselves at least I could name several individual cusses who have been tried and found wanting."

Well, we growled and kicked and tugged at our cords all day, for things began to look serious, but the burro hitches held good. Just before dark the guards brought water, and examined our hands and feet to assure themselves that the cords had not slipped. Then they commended us to sweet dreams and left us. Sometime before midnight the door opened softly and — presto — we all felt the presence of a divinity. Sure enough, it was the Angel and a Chiqua Indian servant. In two minutes we were all stretching free limbs, with Watkins chanting praises of the Angel under his breath. They had bound and gagged the guards, and as we passed out into the cool night air we gave each of them a couple of good ones as a parting souvenir. We would have put in a few more agreeable moments about them, for we felt that we had a kick coming—but we were afraid of displacing the gags and raising a disturbance, so we left them and followed our deliverers to where our mules were staked out close to the trail.

And our little group made a very pretty picture out there in the crisp, clear moonlight above the timber line—a picture that impressed even Watkins—for if there is anything that brings the soul to the surface it is a touch of free, bold, unfettered mountain scenery after a short sojourn in a South American calaboose. And the Angel well, she looked good even in the dark, but by moonlight she certainly stood alone. She watched the Kid and breathed deep, and when she passed us our arms her thin lips quivered.

"I have do my best," she said softly; "but it is so little—so small ze service I hesitate to mention him. My Indian here he vill show you ze trail so you cannot lose him. It is ze old Inca trail to Mollenda and little used. In Mollenda you may take ze big ship to your own country, and zere, perhaps you may zink in your generosity zat ze people of ze Latin race are not all vile, for zere is one who have turned from her people to give her hand, her little help, to ze stranger."

She passed the Kid a purse of money and we could see the tear-drops on her dark eyelashes as she turned to go back to the village. But for once the Kid was deaf to the golden tinkle and blind to the beauties of the yellow boys. He wasn't going to pass up that 120 pound nugget of Simon-pure so easily, so he took both of her little hands in his own and started the argument.

"You will come with us," said the Kid; "with me — and we will be married by the first priest we can draft into our service."

She shook her head, but the long sobs told the tale of love that nestled in her warm little heart.

"Listen," resumed the Kid, "if you return, I go back also, for it will be a hell upon earth to you, now that you have assisted us to escape. But, Heaven or Hell, I share it with you."

For a moment she gazed fixedly at the Kid and hesitated, then the Kid uncorked some of his perfumed *Castellano* and anointed that small female therewith some copious. It must have been an edition de luxe tale of love he spun to her, for at the finish she just dropped into his arms and clung there like a fixture. When the expedition was ready to start the Kid helped the Angel to mount his own mule, tossed the provisions off the spare animal, and attempted to ride on the pack saddle.

"It's all right," whispered Watkins to me, "although it might seem odd to an outsider, but to tell the honest truth I wouldn't give a whoop in hell for a brand of love that would take the necessaries of life into consideration for a second."

But as Watkins and myself were not in love, we gathered up the provisions, and what we couldn't pack on the Indian we divided between us. The next morning at breakfast the infatuated ones ate with as much relish as though Cupid had personally superintended the bill of fare, which goes to prove that although love may be blind, it generally stands pat on appetite.

We reached Mollenda without serious mishap. Watkins and I bossed the Indian en route, the Kid bossed us, while the Angel bossed the whole camp. I don't remember ever having seen two young people so hopelessly, helplessly entangled in love's meshes as were the Angel and the Kid. Each would X ray into the soul of the other for a half hour at a time — turn about, then gaze away off into space like a pair of Raphael's Cherubs for another half hour.

"Why for you call *su compañero* 'ze Kid,' asked the Angel, with many blushes. "Is it zat he has ze temperament of ze sheep, ze lamb or ze goat zat you call him ze kid?" "Oh, no;" replied Watkins, promptly, "it's on account of his youth. He is so young, you know; so young and innocent."

"Ah! so innocent;" she murmured, "so young and innocent. I like him — ze name very much ze Kid Kidito."

Then she went back with another search warrant into the innermost recesses of the Kid's soul, while Watkins got to the lee of a big boulder and chortled like an infant over a fresh bottle of milk.

At Mollenda the Kid lost no time in hunting up a priest and getting married. We had a quiet little wedding breakfast and Watkins and I drank to the health of the young couple so often and so copiously that we were sick for a week. And at this point the plot thickened; a big black cloud struck the horizon of our pilgrimage, and the barometer of our fortunes dove into the dregs.

We were too late to catch the coast steamer and were afraid to wait for the next one, so we bargained with the captain of a sailing vessel to land us at Panama. Panama was not a particularly healthy climate to be heading for just at that time, but with that confounded church-bell affair ding-donging from one end of the country to the other, we just had to get out of Peru. Electricity travels very slowly in that country, but quite frequently it has been known to overtake a crippled burro expedition.

When we embarked on the *Gull-wing* (her name should have been "Submarine" for she was under water half the time) it looked to us like a case of wet feet throughout the passage. Then when we got a glimpse of the crew the next morning we all came to the conclusion that the *Gull wing* would have to go down some *pronto* if she sank before we had our throats cut. For the crew of the *Gull wing* was a hard looking formation — in fact, one might have raked Davy Jones's locker from one end of the Spanish main to the other with little hope of being able to gather so choice an assortment of piratical-looking ruffians — while the captain just fluttered the blue ribbon in the face of the whole crew when it came to the pure buccaneer cut of feature. The fact that the captain was an American did not help matters, for when an American goes wrong he generally goes the limit in cussedness.

"I don't like them, grouped, or as individuals," said the Kid; "but if they cut our throats it will be for the pure love of the game and not for the money in it, for after the wedding festivities and the passage money, our exchequer is simply a hollow mockery."

But the financial situation didn't appear to disturb the Kid a particle, for "love soars on buoyant wing" and if he could but land the Angel and himself ashore somewhere — anywhere — he was perfectly satisfied.

The second day out the captain approached our little group and began to outline the situation.

"Now, I don't want to alarm you, gentlemen," he opened up as a preliminary; "but I hope you are all armed."

"Two pistols in each hand," replied the Kid promptly; "and if there is any slaughtering to be done just recommend us."

"Very good," said the captain, "for I expect a little trouble with these dogs forward before the voyage is ended. You see, it's a little trouble left over from the down trip. They mutinied and attempted to desert the ship in a body, and instead of putting them in irons, I put most of them into splints. The halo of divinity never did play very vividly around any of their saintly brows, but after I went through them with a belaying pin and a six-shooter, there wasn't the making of a respectable mug in the whole bunch. They may try to scuttle the ship, for I wouldn't trust one of them from the first officer to the cook. The cook is the ringleader, and he is just bilge-water mean — too poisonous for shark meat. At least the sharks have never tackled him, although I have kicked him overboard in every port from Panama to Valparaiso. He fed me rat poison on the down trip, but civilized seasoning doesn't seem to taste right, and I'm waiting now for his head to mend a bit, and when he shakes out a few of the reefs I took in his scalp, I'll put a good sized dent in his intellect, if the stew pans hold out. And so, gentlemen, I am going to depend upon you in an emergency, and if one poor American isn't worth four of those lubbers, I'll drink bilge-water hereafter. There are four of us besides the little bell ringer in the after-cabin, who is too sick to count on, but if anything should happen I suppose we would have to take him."

"What do you mean by a bell ringer?" inquired the Kid, getting wise immediately.

"I don't know much about him," replied the captain, "only that he is taking a bell to Panama as a present to his native village. I guess he is a religious old duck, for he keeps the bell right with him in his state-room. And now, gentlemen, you understand the situation, so you must not be surprised if you are called at any hour of the day or night to take to the small boats."

"Oh, it's Señor Don Alexandro, all right;" said the Kid as soon as we were alone, "and if we don't get that bell yet, I'll join the captain on the bilge-water proposition."

We held a consultation and decided to stay with the captain. He was not a prepossessing specimen of humanity, but he was not quite so numerous as the crew, so we chose the lesser evil.

"It is no doubt a case of jobbing the underwriters," remarked the Kid, "and the captain fires or scuttles the vessel himself and blames it on the crew. They are a lot of psalm singers compared to the captain, so we go into the game with our eyes open and trust neither captain nor crew farther than we can see them."

At two o'clock the next morning we were all on deck waiting for the grand finale. The Angel was a little pale, but she nestled up close to the Kid and seemed to be as much at home as any of us. We were all a little nervous, I'll admit, for the Pacific Ocean is a big, wet affair to sink into; but Watkins opened up a can of his sage-brush philosophy and things began to look more cheerful.

"I've seen the time," said he, "when a situation of this kind would be just what you would ask Santa to bring you for your Christmas stocking. Take, for instance, a case where the sand of the desert is flying so thick that you have to take three pulls at the atmosphere to get a spoonful of air; all the water holes a long way beyond the horizon; your canteen empty since the day before yesterday, and your very soul shriveled up and parched with heat until you can almost hear it crack; why, the Pacific Ocean would seem a small affair when it came to a case of quenching your thirst. But just at present I would like a small dash of sand storm in mine, but if I can't get it, and it must be a case of an overdose of moisture, I'll console myself with the thought that a watery grave saves a good many people from being hung."

Watkins' last remark was intended to be a thing at the captain,

who was listening to him, but you couldn't jar that personage with any little personal innuendo.

"No immediate cause for alarm," said he, "and for the sake of the macaw I hope you will all keep under cover. Those hounds scuttled the vessel, all right, and we are sinking, but she'll float for several hours yet. If you have any valuables——"

"I have all the valuables in the hollow of my arm at present," said the Kid, giving his new wife what Watkins called one of those delicate, almost imperceptible honeymoon hugs.

"Very good," said the captain, with a hyena grin, and a wink that would cause anything within pistol range to slumber, "you just stand pat and wait for me. I think I can handle any insubordination on the part of the crew, but I wish to make sure that I have the moral support of a couple of extra pistol flashes." Then he bowed, turned on his heel and left us.

The next minute the order "all hands on deck" rang from end to end of the vessel. And the captain certainly looked all right as he faced the mob of cut-throats that came tumbling up from the forecastle and surged around him. He looked to belong to the same litter as the hell hounds who had answered his call; but when he glared down into their turbulent throats and brought the yellow of abject fear to their faces, one realized that he had been tempered in a fiercer fire.

There was plenty of energy in that early morning marine view, potential energy mostly, but one could feel it, and we also felt the cold chills "doing a hot foot" along our spinal columns.

For a few seconds we could not tell how things would turn out, and in the excitement of the moment the Kid whispered to us to cut loose if they downed the captain, but just then the captain spoke and shattered the suspense.

"Listen," he said, quietly, "if I had one man in this crew that I could trust — one small cabin-boy whom I could depend upon — I would sail this old tub into Panama in spite of you all. You have succeeded in scuttling the ship and judging by the way she is making water, you did a very good job. All I hope is that you didn't start a fire in her hold, for let me tell you there are twenty tons of black powder and a million rounds of ammunition stowed under those hatches."

I have heard speeches — both Fourth of July and political — but they were not in it with the captain's little talk, when it came to a question of voltage. It might not have been quite so noticeable, but just about that time we began to smell the smoke as it oozed up through the cracks of the defective deck and hatches. We closed in around the Angel and the silence was so pronounced that I could plainly hear Watkins rattling a pocketful of cartridges. For a minute we stood like specters—a phantom crew — then the mob shook itself loose from the spell and with a roar and a growl made a wild rush for the boats. In the midst of the uproar Señor Don Alexandro came tumbling out of his state-room, and rushing up to the captain, frantically besought him to save the bell.

"Oh, damn your old bell," replied that functionary, impatiently; "no time for church music now. When that powder gets in its work you will have music that will raise you off your feet."

Watkins and I took the Don in hand and rushed him into the first boat lowered. In the excitement I doubt very much if he recognized us, although the way in which Watkins foot-balled him over the deck would have brought joy to the soul of a quarter-back. I think he must have sprained a toe when he attempted to kick a goal; at any rate I felt a great pity for the Don whenever I saw Watkins limp. After transferring the Don, we went to his state-room, hugged the bell up on deck, and hoisted it into the captain's boat.

"No hurry," said the captain, coming over to us, "you have plenty of time to stow away your valuables, for that little gunpowder talk of mine was all fiction. I thought it the quickest way to get rid of the brutes, for they looked ugly; — so we'll wait for a calm sea and then take to the small boat. But what is this?"

"Oh, that's Señor Don Alexandro's church bell," replied Watkins. "He stole it from us in the interior of Peru, no doubt thinking that it contained precious metal, but aside from its archeological value it is comparatively worthless."

"No use lumbering the boat with any such old trash," said the captain, "so toss it overboard as music for the mermaids."

"It goes with us," said Watkins, firmly, and *we* are going all right." The captain scowled, and hesitated a moment as though

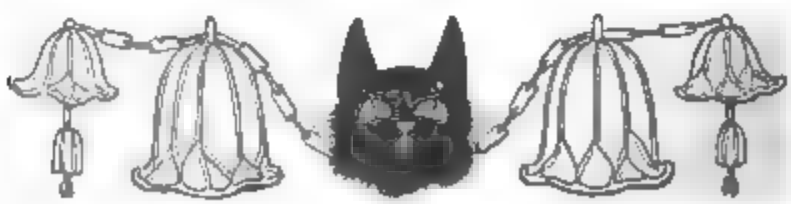
he intended to argue the point, but Watkins had a way of looking straight ahead when he called a bluff, so the captain let the matter drop.

We were picked up by the *Lena*, bell and all, and landed safely in San Francisco. The captain disappeared in the fog and that was the last we saw of him. Watkins and I talked the matter over and agreed to take the Angel in with us as an equal partner in the precious bell, giving her a fourth interest therein, but she shook her pretty head and said she would pray for us. I guess she had some sort of religious scruples in regard to that particular bell, and as the Kid had already picked up a few stray bits of matrimonial wisdom, he also refused to touch even a cent of the bell money.

"Now I hope you'll have an attack of conscience also," said Watkins to me, "and refuse to touch that tainted church bell fund, then I'll take the whole wad and go back to South America and see the country by daylight. *Caramba!* for a slow lot they are certainly giving us a run for our money.

Well, to make assurance doubly sure, we chipped a small piece off the bell and had it assayed, and then Watkins deferred his trip to South America indefinitely, for what he had told the captain with regard to the bell was perfectly true — aside from its archeological value it wouldn't have brought any more than so much scrap-iron, so we turned it over to the Kid and the Angel and they presented it to one of the old missions. There was a very nice little article in the newspapers about it and that's about all we ever got out of the "Bell Exchange."

Watkins and I are still hunting "pockets" with Peru away off in the invisible distance. We may yet succeed in rounding up that Peruvian treasure-trove, but if we do we will have to eliminate all extraneous matter and adopt a more business-like method of procedure.



The Man Who Waited.*

BY JAMES DEE BALDWIN.

OR the greater part of his life Ditmar Smoor had believed that he possessed the distinction of a name borne by no other mortal. He was naturally surprised when he saw his name in the title of a magazine story, and for days the Ditmar Smoor of flesh and blood was absorbed in the mystery. Where did the spurious Smoor originate?

At the table, at his desk, in church, on street, in the street cars — Smoor could be seen to rouse himself from a fit of abstraction only to become absorbed in the contemplation of a clipping.

His speculations were vague and unsatisfactory, but soon it dawned upon him that the author of the story about the other Smoor might possess the solution of the problem. Accordingly he addressed a letter to the author of "The Nemesis of Ditmar Smoor," in care of the publishers of the magazine, and in course of time, when he had almost given up hope, he received the following reply:

DEAR MR. SMOOR

Your communication of some months since has followed me in my wanderings, and finally overtaken me, and I am glad to be able to furnish the information you request.

One Sunday afternoon, a little more than three years ago, I was sitting in the railroad station at Houston, Tex., waiting for a belated train, and occupying the tedium of waiting with a copy of the *Sunday Post*. On one of the local pages was a long list of advertised letters remaining uncalled for at the Houston post office, with a vague expectation of seeing my own name, or prompted by mere curiosity, I glanced down the names beginning with "S" and noticed the very unusual one—"Ditmar Smoor." It seemed to me so odd that I at once tore out the list, fortunately retaining the heading containing the date, and filed it among my notes and material for future stories.

About a year since I wrote the story that has attracted your attention, and used your unusual name, it has only recently been published

I am glad that I still have the newspaper clipping among my notes, and herewith enclose it, hoping that it may prove to be of service to you Very truly yours, BEVERLY STRANGE.

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Smoor had no doubt that the advertised letter had been intended for him. It was evident from the fact of its being advertised that the envelope bore no return address. It would, therefore, go to the Dead Letter office at Washington, where it would be opened. If it contained the address as well as the name of the writer, it would be returned to her — Smoor felt sure it was She — or otherwise, after the expiration of a period of which he felt great doubt, be duly destroyed. He wrote to the Dead Letter office, fearing that there was but one chance in a thousand that anything would result.

As Smoor mailed his letter, his thoughts were of a girl, just budding into womanhood when he had last seen her. Was she still in existence? As he considered the possibility of her being lost to him forever, the despair in his eyes, the twitching of the mouth, the wistfulness of the patient face, all bore testimony to the depth of his regard for her from whom he had received no message in three long years. He had written the last letter in their correspondence. No reply had been received. He would not admit to himself that she had *ignored* his letter, though it contained something very vital to both. The letter that never came *must* some day reach him, he was convinced, and compensate for the weary years of waiting.

Three years previously, urgent business had called him out of town. He had telephoned to Bynsve, and she had promised to write to him during his absence, if it were possible. Each day of his absence he had inquired for mail, and day after day had assured himself that the letter would come to-morrow. Sick at heart, he returned home, and called at the girl's home for an explanation. There was no response to his ring, and the house seemed deserted. The girl and her mother, the neighbors said, had vanished in a night, making no farewells and leaving no clue to their destination. Further inquiry showed that their household effects had been sold to a local dealer, to whom the mother had stated that they were going to "break up housekeeping" and board with a friend. There the clues ended.

Smoor felt that he knew the cause of the mother's actions, and held the girl blameless. He believed that the daughter returned his love, though she had not confessed it. Of the elder woman's

decided objection to his suit, entirely baseless, he was painfully aware. It was simply a case of mutual antipathy, which is rather more common than love at first sight.

But though one pair of eyes had frowned upon him, the younger smiled approval, and to Ditmar Smoor the letter that had not come was an actuality that would some day make clear the reasons for its long delay. Still, three years is a long time to wait for a letter, especially when the happiness of one's life depends upon it. Unless she were an actual prisoner, could she not have written at least a line? Perhaps —

Suddenly all speculations were set at rest for the time by a communication in Smoor's morning mail. The unstamped envelope bore the return card of the Dead Letter Office, and contained an unsigned, type-written sheet. In unmistakably feminine terms the writer stated that she was the clerk who, three years before, had handled a "dead" letter which the most casual reader must realize would be highly prized by its addressee. It had been mailed on a train, its envelope bore no return card, and its writer had given no address, signing only her first name.

The anonymous clerk then proceeded to say that, though it was her business to read thousands and thousands of miscarried letters every year, and she never paid any attention to unusual names, yet, in this instance, the peculiar name of Ditmar Smoor had dwelt in her memory in connection with the language of the letter itself, which, she added, had impressed her as being the most tender and beautiful composition she had ever read. This odd communication concluded with these words:

"To have preserved the letter would have been a violation of the regulations governing this department and a dutiful employee does not disregard an employer's rules."

The young man's heart sank as he reached the conclusion of the explanatory letter that did not explain, but in the manner of a man searching his pockets for something which he knows cannot be found, he again mechanically looked into the long "official" envelope, and drew out something which made his sinking heart bound with delirious joy. It was a letter, in Her well known dainty hand, though written with a pencil stub on the back of his own letter — the one to which he had so long awaited an answer.

I said all that he had longed for — and more — and he blessed the sympathetic woman clerk upon whom the touching words had made so fortunate an impression. But while it set his heart at rest concerning the most important thing, another mystery remained for him to unravel, for Bynsee's affectionate letter gave him also grave cause for apprehension, for it told him that the girl so dear to him was probably immured beyond his reach, and that he must endeavor to come to her rescue.

"Mother will not divulge our destination, but I feel sure that I am to be placed in the Ursuline Academy at El Paso, and that means virtual imprisonment. Come to me as soon as you can."

He lost not a moment in taking a train for El Paso, cursing his own stupid absent-mindedness the while, as his own letter had revealed to him the cause of the whole unfortunate misunderstanding: — He had inadvertently given Bynsee the address of Houston, where he had been intending to stop, instead of Orange, which was his destination on that unlucky business trip!

The impatient lover's journey to El Paso, and his call at the convent were really more expeditious than they seemed to him, for he was intolerant of the slightest delay. Never had train or carriage seemed so slow. After a long and torturing interview with the Mother Superior, Dutmar Smoor's insistence finally prevailed, his card was taken, and, after an age of suspense, a sad-looking young woman in deepest black entered. Her face lighted, and never again became so sad, as she exclaimed, "Dutmar!"

"Bynsee!" cried the welcome visitor.

"Why didn't you answer my letter? I thought you cared for me!" faltered the girl.

That Dutmar cared he gave instant proof in a demonstration quite shocking to the Mother Superior, but eminently satisfactory to the Novice she was about to lose, as was also Smoor's explanation.

"You have not taken the veil?" was his first question.

"No, I put on black out of respect to Mother — but I was really mourning for the Man Who Waited."

Ladsby's Lost Link.*

BY DON MARK LEMON.

HE nerve of the foreigner!" cried Ladsby, glaring at the newspaper he had been eagerly scanning. "Of all the brass-riveted cheek, this is the limit! What, me go lose the other link! Me!"

"What is wrong, dear?" timidly questioned Ladsby's wife, alarmed by the expletive outburst of her husband.

Ladsby glared from the paper to his wife. "I told you I lost one of my diamond cuff-links last evening, on the way home from the office. I wouldn't have taken a run for assemblyman for it. Well, read that!" He thrust the paper at his wife, pointing to a notice among those of the lost-and-found column.

As hastily as she could, Mrs. Ladsby read the following cheerful advertisement:

> **DIAMOND CUFF-LINK.**—If the gentleman who lost a diamond cuff link at the corner of H and 6th St. last evening will kindly lose the mate at the same corner, near the hydrant on the south side, between five and six o'clock this evening, the finder of the first link will esteem it a high personal favor.

"Well?" demanded Ladsby, fairly quivering with choler.

"Well!" timidly echoed his wife, who was so twisted by the unique advertisement that she could not quite collect her thoughts. "Well!"

"Is that all you have to say?" gasped Ladsby.

Mrs. Ladsby smiled meekly. "It's so singular, I really don't know what to say," she sighed.

But Ladsby did. At least he knew what he wished to say, and he said it noisily.

"I'll lay for the fellow! I'll lose the other link, and the for-

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eigner who picks it up will be the Indian who put in this notice. And when I catch him —" Ladsby's fist came down on the table like a sack of meeting-houses

"Don't get yourself arrested," plead the wife. "It just may be his way of appointing a place where he can return the other link."

"Not much!" cried Ladsby. "And if it is, I won't be publicly trifled with'" He glared at the cuckoo clock. "I wish it were five now! Good-by; you needn't look for me to-night till you see me, but when you do see me, there 'll be two cuff-links with me and a dead Indian in town'" He hurried into the hallway for his hat, and left the house in anything but an agreeable mood.

Mrs. Ladsby drew a deep breath of relief, then one of dread, — relief that her husband had taken his huff to the office, and dread for the evening.

"If he would only meet the man quietly," she sighed, "he might get the lost link back, and not run any danger of offending him. I'm sure it's only the way the gentleman has of returning the link."

She began to gather up the breakfast things, when a sudden idea made her sit down quickly. Why should she not be at the corner of H and 6th streets at five o'clock and, if bad went to worse, prevent her husband from committing an outrage upon the person of the writer of the advertisement?

Her resolve made her contented the whole day, and at five o'clock she reached the corner where the denouement was to take place and, crossing to the north side, she found a little safety station between a street light and a telegraph pole, where she could seem to be watching for a car while she waited for her husband to connect with catastrophe.

At five minutes after the hour Ladsby turned the corner. He was walking briskly, and his anger made him step high. He crossed to the hydrant referred to in the advertisement, and openly removing the diamond link from his left cuff, dropped it upon the sidewalk at the foot of the hydrant.

A boy was seated astride the iron plug, engaged at swinging his legs and whistling shrilly. At least it seemed that a boy was seated on the hydrant, but as Ladsby dropped the valuable link the lithe, youthful form leapt from its perch, snatched up the treasure, and

disappeared around the corner into a near-by cellar-way with such amazing suddenness that Ladsby for a moment stood motionless on the spot, believing the figure a fallacy of vision. Then, with a shout, he made after the disappearing point of boy. He took the cellar stairs at a leap, landed in a puddle at the bottom, gathered himself up with a panted oath, and rushed forward headlong into the walled vacancy before him.

Mrs. Ladsby hurried over and peered down the stairs, and watched and waited in great trepidation, but as a familiar form appeared below, she hastily mingled with the passers-by and returned home. A little later her husband arrived. His clothes were muddy, and bore every evidence to their wearer having lately crawled or attempted to crawl through a narrow exit barred with barbed wire. He had a cut over his right eye, and was cuffless.

Ladsby made for the bathroom, to efface the marks of his unsuccessful gymnastics. "I fell off a street car," he lucidly explained to his wife.

Mrs. Ladsby said nothing. She loved her husband and was sorry for him, though he had lied like an extra, but the next morning, when she picked up the paper that Ladsby had been reading at the breakfast table and discovered a corner torn away, she became curious and ran over and borrowed a neighbor's paper. The torn corner, among other lost-and-found notices, contained the following:

> **DIAMOND CUFF-LINKS.**—I wish to thank the gentleman for kindly losing the mate to the pair of diamond cuff links. The link I found so pleased me that I could not be happy till I had got the mate. Now I have them both, and I would not part with them for two hundred dollars. Thanks.

Mrs. Ladsby thought it over.

A Love-Token's Oracle.*

BY J. S. WOODHOUSE.

NOT until almost noon had the sun climbed high enough to peep over the great skyscrapers and cast its warm light through a dirty window into a little attic room that betrayed the penury and solitude of the occupant.

An old white-haired man, poorly clad, sat by a crude wooden table that was strewn with the remnants of a meagre meal. His head lay upon the bare boards, and stretched before it were two emaciated hands whose outstanding vessels disclosed the sluggish course of life that flowed within.

The absence of any chair, save that upon which the sleeper sat, showed plainly enough the loneliness that, with the pleasures and pains of eighty years, had been forgotten in a brief respite of sleep. An old cupboard on the wall, a narrow bed in the corner, a few pegs on the door hung with a few old clothes, and a wash bowl and pitcher on a box were the only necessaries. The one apparent luxury was a single shelfworn book upon the cupboard.

Aroused by the warmth, the sleeper raised his head and, beholding the sun, said feebly, "Ah, old friend, you're back again." He tottered to the window and looked at the great hands of a tower clock and sighed, "But later than usual. A little later each day. Even you grow tired of charity to an old man."

Streets far below were teeming with life. Men, who looked like pygmies, hurried in every direction. Trams, wagons, and automobiles struggled for passage. The city seemed a seething caldron of commercial prosperity. Every day the old man looked upon that picture, and with new hopes went down. But he was jostled aside by ambitious young men. With difficulty did he escape death before the hurrying vehicles, and from the selfish mass he retreated with a sigh up the long stairs to this, his only home.

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"Why, old world," he murmured, "am I denied a place along the fighting line? I paid my tuition with years of study in your universities, served my apprenticeship in your hard grind of daily routine, and receive as compensation only misery and hunger. Ah, your debt is unpaid. You owe me better. It's mine, and I shall have it."

The old man straightened his bent form, held up his trembling head, and took a single stride from the window, when there was a loud rapping at the door. His palsied hand went into his trousers pocket and turned it out empty. He relapsed and breathed softly until he heard the retreating footsteps of his landlord. He supported himself by the table while his eyes ran appealingly around the little room until they fell upon the lone book.

"Must you, too, go for bread?" he asked the inanimate object. "One by one they have gone — poetry, philosophy, religion, yes, even the Bible before you. I am loth to part with you — the link to the sweetest dream of my life, the symbol of love. Your leaves were turned by the fingers of the dearest woman in the world — her whom I loved, but did not win." And the old man sunk into a chair in a reminiscent mood.

"Mary and I hunted flowers as children, studied together in school as mates, clasped hands in youth, and parted at twenty-five. I loved her all the time, but she received my attentions with such frank expectancy I could never prod myself over the brotherly line.

"And you, old book, were the only gift I ever laid within her hands. We went through you page by page together.

"Then John came. He was my friend, and a noble man. He loved her too, and asked her to marry him. She came to me to know what to do, and I told her he was a prince among men. She accepted him. Then, old book, just the night before the wedding, she called me to her and gave you back to me. I didn't want you then, but she said it must be so. Years rolled by, and she died. I never have had courage to look within you since. But if we must part —" Tears choked the old man as he arose and lifted the dust-covered book down. Tenderly he laid it on the table, and devoutly seated himself before it. He turned but a few pages when there dropped out a faded lavender envelope, the seal of

which was unbroken. He lifted it to the sun. There was a letter within. With trembling fingers he tore open the long belated message from his sweetheart. He nervously adjusted an old pair of glasses and, holding the writing in the sunlight, slowly read:

MY DEAR GEORGE--

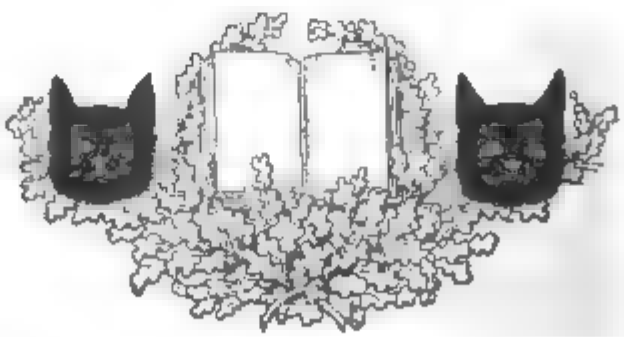
This is the parting of our ways. We have enjoyed many years of life together. I had hoped for many more such. Your feelings toward me have not been disguised. My soul has responded to your every feeling. It has not been my place to speak. Perhaps you have never believed I cared. Your one fault, one injustice to yourself and to me, has been that you never asked. Even had you spoken to-night I would have broken every other tie for you.

As I bow to my fate, dear friend, to go my way while you turn along another path, let me point to you your one seeming weakness in life. The world is full of richness that is yours for but the asking. Don't be content with what is thrust upon you. Knock loudly at the door of your opportunities. Crush some of your pride, for we have divine promise in the words "Ask and ye shall receive." Still your true friend I remain.

"Mary, Mary, you loved me?" The old man struggled to his feet. "Lost, lost, the sweetness of life for the want of asking. Ah, I see it all now." And he staggered to the window. "I never asked, and I am poor, miserably poor — without love, friends or food," and the old man surveyed himself pitiably.

He started toward the door with determination written on his face, but paused half way. His countenance lighted up with an inspiring thought. He lifted his arms above his head, and turning his eyes upward, cried, "O God! I ask Thee — break these chains of poverty."

He listened attentively as he let himself down carefully into his chair. A smile twitched the corners of his mouth as his head slowly went down upon the table. The last rays of sunlight in the room flickered upon the white hair and then left the attic in gloom. There was a loud knocking at the door. It brought no response from within. The chains were broken.



"Hit! what are you talking about, Pud? There wasn't anything there."

"What!" cried Pud. "Didn't you see 'em right on to us? Eh, didn't you see 'em?"

"You didn't hear 'em hit, did you?" asked the brakeman. "There wasn't anything ahead. You must have been asleep, Pud, and dreamed it. Let me help you up there."

Pud was not much hurt. He was dirty enough from the roll and his left arm was sprained. Outside of that he had made a very satisfactory landing. He got back into the cab.

"Didn't you see anything?" he asked half sulkily of the fireman.

"I wasn't looking out just then," replied the fireman. "But when you halloed I gave a glance ahead but didn't see anything. And by the time you had unloaded I didn't see anything else to do but put on the air. You shut off all right, Pud, but you forgot to put on the air. Thirty days for that!"

There was no levity in Pud's face. He got into his place and looked straight ahead in moody silence. He struck the down grade and let the train drift into the yard.

"What was wrong with you, anyway, Pud?" asked the brakeman when they came to a stop.

"You had better see a doctor, Pud," ventured the fireman. "You may not be hurt in any way, but——" he tapped himself suggestively on the head.

Pud made no reply. He got off with a limp.

"Boys, I wish you wouldn't say anything about this," said he. "But I'll be dummed if I can understand it. I wasn't asleep and I wasn't dreaming, and I'm not off in my noodle. I saw a headlight right before me in the cut — that's a cinch!"

"Hello, Pud!" said the Yardmaster, holding up his lantern, "What's the matter? Been unloading? I see you lit on your shoulder."

"Did you have an engine up at Hiner's Cut just before we got there?" asked Pud.

"Not this night," said the Yardmaster. "There hasn't been an engine out of the yard since 82 left here three hours ago."

"We met 82 at Loree," said Pud reflectively, "it wasn't them."

The Phantom Headlight.*

BY J. E. SMITH.

HESE are days of big things. In Hamlet's time people were satisfied with a ghost that looked like a man — and had hollow eyes — and was clothed in white and flapped his transparent draperies, or stretched forth a stern and warning arm. In these days anything that looks like a human being makes no impression. A ghost must be frightful by reason of its proportions. It must be tremendous and dynamic.

Take a phantom train.

There is something swift-moving and irresistible about its flash of fire that stirs the imagination of the dullest — stands the hair on end and sends creepy goose-flesh sensations down the spine.

Of course there are stout-hearted railroaders who will pooh-pooh the idea of such apparitions, and who will insist that every mystery of the rail has a natural explanation.

But when three safe and sane engineers, within the space of less than one hour, see looming up before them with flashing headlight, a ghost engine that immediately melts into thin air, there is something so supernatural, so inexpressibly unreal about it, that we are forced to attribute it to the spirit world — at least until we are shown otherwise.

Take the three engineers I have named — "Paul" Butterbaugh, Jake Schneider, and Mat Wolfe. All of them stolid, unresponsive, and unimaginative Dutch.

A ghost, picking this trio for experimental effect or other purpose, shows a lack of knowledge of human nature, as nothing but the weirdest kind of hobgoblin flapdoodle would move any of them. It is the province of this narrative, however, to relate that they were moved, precipitously and unceremoniously moved, and with-

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forethought or calculation — that all of them unloaded, and ...ck the grass line, and turned turtle into the ditch at exactly ... same spot, all within the brief interval of about thirty min-...

It happened at Hiner's Cut.

Hiner's Cut, in reality, is not much of a cut, ten feet at the ...pest. It is at the top of the hill, and from there it is easy ...n grade for a few miles to the west side yard. The road enters ... cut with a short but sharp curve, so that nothing can be seen ...nd. At the highest point on the right-hand side of the right-...ay there is an old cemetery, long since deserted, and now over-...wn with weeds and vines, and wherein a cluster of pine trees ... kept long and faithful sentry.

...he stones and markers are of flat marble and have fallen over, ...re leaning at an awkward angle. It is a lonely and desolate ...ce, and naturally a ghost would lurk, spring out or stalk forth ...m this particular spot.

On the night of the apparition there were three sections of No. ..., and running close together. Each had a full tonnage.

Pud Butterbaugh was pulling the first section and was not ...g to exceed twenty miles an hour up the grade to Hiner's Cut. ... night was very dark and Pud was looking straight ahead. ...ddenly, right before him, a headlight burst from the cut.

One convulsive tug at the lever, a shout of warning to the fire-..., and Pud jumped.

He landed properly, somersaulted into the ditch, gathered him-... with a mighty effort, and crawled and rolled to the right-of-... fence. Every second he expected the crash, and he had pres-... of mind enough to get himself as far away from the wreckage ...possible. He brought up against the barb wire, and could go ...farther. Then he raised his head and looked.

His engine was in the cut by this time and the train was slow-... down. A moment later the head brakeman swung off and ...n running back.

Pud was now on his feet.

"Are you hurt, Pud?" cried the brakeman, holding up his ...rn.

Pud groaned. "Did they hit?" he asked faintly.

Railroad secrets are like murder, they will out. Pud was forced to narrate his experience, and he was compelled to admit that it must have been a trick of the imagination.

"Not on your life," said the head brakeman, scoffing at such a simple explanation.

"It's a ghost out of that old grave-yard and it dived straight at Pud on account of his past life. Next trip it will get him if he don't mend his ways."

"Pud probably got a reflection off his own nose," volunteered the fireman. "I've known it was coming for some time."

While these light-headed observations were being exchanged, second 71 came into the yard and the engine brought up opposite.

"Hello, Bill!" cried out the fireman to the yardmaster, "Get the stretcher, Jake's got a bad leg — may be broken. He can't stand on it."

They got the stretchers and assisted Jake out of the cab on to them.

Between moans of pain he said:

"I don't know what it was. I can't explain it. We were coming up the hill to Hiner's Cut and a headlight flashed right in my face. I thought we were in for it, all right. I yelled to the boys and put on the air and jumped. I lit pretty hard on that foot. I can't bear my weight on it."

"Dummed if I understand it," supplemented the fireman, "Jake wasn't asleep. He must have imagined it. There wasn't anything ahead of us. When Jake let out a yell I looked out quick, but before I knew what was up he was down and off and put on the air."

"That's an improvement on Pud," said the first brakeman. "He only shut off."

"This is no time for foolishness," said Pud. "I saw it and Jake saw it, and there is something there." Pud spoke with growing confidence. "I thought maybe I had imagined it. But when Jake sees it at the same place, that shows there is no imagination about it."

"It is certainly puzzling that both of you should have had the same experience," said the Yardmaster

The talk became more serious. Various theories were advanced

to account for the strange affair. Railroad men are not given to silly superstitions, and any intimation of ghosts or mention of the uncanny burial place with the circumstance was vigorously ridiculed.

The crews awaited the arrival of third 71 with a lively curiosity to learn if they had seen anything.

In due time it came in. The fireman and brakeman were standing in the gang-way

"Say," cried out the latter, "'phone for a policeman. We got a crazy man in the cab. He's just had a head-end, and instead of dying at his post, he rolled out into the ditch and ruined his overalls."

Mat Wolfe, the engineer, poked his head out with a sheepish grin.

"Tell 'em about the ghost, Mat."

"A headlight flashed on me just as I was coming to Hiner's Cut, and I got off before they hit. That's all there is to it. I landed easy and I can't tell you anything more about it."

"You will never hear of him wearing a Carnegie medal," continued the brakeman. "He didn't warn us, and he didn't even shut off. We stood by the old tub, the fireman and me, and let 'em hit, and went to our deaths like men, only there wasn't anything doing. The only thing I regret is that we didn't keep on a coming and let Mat walk in We would if we had known it was a case of 'willies' and he wasn't hurt any."

Mat crawled down, a little dirty and torn, but none the worse otherwise.

"I saw it," said he, "there's no question about it. It flashed out of the cut right ahead Of course I unloaded who wouldn't! If any of you can tell me anything about it I wish you would I can't understand it, and it makes me feel queer."

There seemed to be no satisfactory explanation of the mystery. There were flippant remarks and banterings, talks of phantom trains and the like, and much wild speculation. There are always these when men are congregated and are stirred by some unusual event.

After all opinions, guesses and theories, one fact remained: Three engineers had seen a headlight close upon them at Hiner's

Cut. What they did, or how they acted, was entirely incidental, and had no relation whatever to the vital fact that there must have been something real in it to have fooled all three of them.

The headlight was there. That point was settled beyond dispute. A collision was imminent — absolutely no doubt about it. With all this established, the fact remained, and was known to all, that there was no engine there at all and had not been.

It was thrashed over in the talk and boiled down to this point: That the engine had been seen, but did not exist — and hard by was the abode of the dead, and the night was dark.

In explanation of any phenomena we go to the supernatural very reluctantly. It cannot be denied in this case that, after every possible explanation offered was shown to have been impossible, the talk of ghosts and phantom trains was received with some credulity. But there are always scoffers in every group, who stick close to cause and effect, and who insist that every mystery is a mystery only because we do not know all the facts.

The Yardmaster was one of these. He was keen to investigate the affair. Just as soon as the yard work permitted they loaded up the crews and ran up to Hiner's Cut on a switch engine.

They went by and came back, approaching the cut with the headlight as the 71's did, but nothing appeared. They did it again and again, without result. They explored the right of way and the adjacent territory. They knocked about among the tombs under the deep and gruesome shadows of the pines — but no ghost broke the stillness with a sepulchral voice or flashed a wizard eye. They returned to the yard.

There was now a touch of dawn in the east, announcing the approach of the great light that dissolves all phantoms and reveals all things in their true proportions.

They took Jake home and Pud and Mat went with him. They extended one another mutual assurance, and all their animated conversation and final conclusions were epitomized in one short expression of Pud's — "Don't it beat hell!"

Hiner's Cut is part of Section 27. Patrick Flynn, one of Ireland's truest sons, is foreman. He lives in a little settlement near the cut and by him lived Dennis Boyle and Maurice Murphy, who had worked for Pat many years.

One day Maurice, casting a sidewise glimpse at the face of fortune, beheld, instead of the customary frown, an expansive grin.

A relative died and left his wife $500 in cash. Thereupon he chafed at the yoke, and with fine celtic independence resented Patrick's authority. He threw down the shovel and pick and with high head and disdain and majestic step marched off Section 27 a free man.

It is known to all in this beloved land of democracy that, in spite of the Declaration of Independence and the intent of the founders, society has its gradations, or, as a newly arrived Irishman aptly put it — "Here a man's as good as any other man an' a dommed sight betther."

So that Maurice Murphy, in the full of his opulence, rather overshadowed the others, including Patrick Flynn, whose previous pre-eminence depended solely on his title of "Boss of Section 27."

Patrick did not take his dethronement graciously, but took umbrage at the airs of Murphy. He made broad and audible hints that at the end of two months Murphy would come crawling — mind you now, crawling — to him and beg for his old job back.

Mutual friends at once conveyed this pessimistic conjecture to Murphy, who raised his fist somewhat dramatically and hazarded a rejoinder that Pat Flynn would be wanting to borrow ten dollars of him before the month was out.

In this way the social amenities of the settlement were disturbed and readjusted, with the Murphys as the central figures.

Mr. Murphy purchased a phonograph for the entertainment of his friends and the prestige of his home.

Mrs. Murphy appeared in satin materials, rich, but varied in colors. Maggie Murphy, aged eighteen, burst forth in an empire gown with crêpe de chine and embroidery, silk fringe and loops of ribbon, and with a fine green satin hat, encircled by shaded plumes.

Pat Flynn, out on the section, by stress of strong inward emotion broke two shovel handles.

Then Murphy gave a reception to celebrate some convenient anniversary.

"Air ye goin', Pat?" asked Dennis Boyle.

"I am not!" replied Pat, digging deep in the gravel.

"Are you?"

"I am," said Dennis. "I'm to run the phonograph. They's twinty records an' t'y goes through t'ree times."

There was the sound of grating teeth, or perhaps it was only the grinding of small stones on Pat's shovel.

"There'll be dancin' an' a roasted pig," Dennis continued. "An' whin the festivities is over, Mr. Murphy ——"

"Gawd almighty," shrieked Pat in derision, "Mister — Mister Murphy — who the divil is he? I don't know any *Mister* Murphy."

"Murphy, thin," said Dennis, somewhat disconcerted. "He's going to presint his family with a presint — a look'n glass — five an' a haf feet long an' two an' a haf wide, so they can see theirselfs full lengt'. I help't uncrate it. We'v wrapped it in a blanket an' hid it in a folder shock by the pig pen. Whin the time comes Mr. — I mean Murphy — will give me the wink an' I'm to bring it in the par — front room — an' remove the blanket, while Murphy expresses his sintiments."

The society function was a great success. The gaities and festivities extended deep into the night.

Grand Opera and ragtime, the ravings of John McCullough and the voice of Abraham Lincoln at Gettysburg came forth with equal intensity from the throat of the phonograph. When at last the felicitous moment for the climax of the evening arrived, Murphy passed Dennis a sapient wink. Dennis at once slid out of the back door, to reappear in a short time, lugging a package which, amid a boisterous and ill-restrained curiosity, he stood on end in the corner.

He then grasped the enshrouding blanket firmly and awaited the signal from Murphy to throw back the folds.

Mr. Murphy strode to the center of the room and beckoned his wife to his side. A momentary silence fell on the assembled guests.

Mr. Murphy scraped his throat and took his wife's hand more awkwardly than affectionately. The silence was somewhat heavy. He had memorized a panegyric of his wife, which now came to him confused and fragmentary.

"In this hour of pleasure an' sintimint," said he, shaking the

tackle and seeing a clear field ahead, "an' with the gloom off th' faces iv all, I am presentin' my wife, Mrs. Murphy, a butiful presint, a remimbrance to her whinever she looks upon it of a good and pious woman — a lovin' mother — wan who's heart is kind and thru. (Dennis tipped the frame at the proper angle to her.) Wan the sight of whose face brings joy — Wan who is honored an' loved by us all, now an' foriver."

He passed the cue to Dennis, and then stepped nimbly aside, leaving Mrs. Murphy alone, facing the frame.

With a deft motion, Dennis flung aside the blanket. The pleasant and ingenious arrangement was that at the close of this gracious tribute, Mrs. Murphy would find herself gazing complacently upon her own features in the new mirror.

What she saw was a gilt frame, backed by a half car door, upon which was tacked a life-size picture of Queen Victoria, gazing directly into the eyes of Mr. Murphy, with an expression placid and unmoved by the glorifying words he had just uttered.

There followed a brief and deadly silence — an oppressive and foreboding pause portending the gathering of the intense human passions that make tragedy.

Then Murphy lit on Dennis Boyle and Tim Moriarity hit a Dutchman named Slagle, whom he didn't like anyway. There was an awful uproar.

This brings us to Patrick Flynn, foreman of section 27, absent but active.

It must be recorded of Pat that he looked with growing repugnance on the social elevation of the Murphys. And that his ill will, being a human quality not at all rare, led him to the fodder shock near the pig pen, from which place he made off with the mirror. He then removed the glass, substituted a half grain door with Victoria's picture for good measure, and restored the altered piece to its hiding place.

The possession of the glass bothered him somewhat. He did not want to destroy it, nor for it to be found in his possession. He looked into it and saw a guilty and puzzled countenance. He decided to put it in the old cemetery at Hiner's Cut. He carried it there and placed it over and against the wire fence. It was at the point where the road curves sharply, and just about the height

above the rail of a locomotive headlight. It was left in an exact position to reflect fairly and fully to a certain point along the track.

Pat went away. His intention had been to place it among the tombs — but where guilt hangs oppressively on the conscience, it is easier to flee than go forward. After a time three 71's passed the point as narrated, and Murphy's mirror flashed back the headlight of each.

Pat was not satisfied. After all, thought he, neither the mirror nor pieces should be found on his section, or near it. It was best there should be no evidence to support any suspicion that he had taken it. Besides, the interval had enabled him to develop a well-defined idea, wherein there was expressed a wider scope of contempt, and a more subtle suggestion of disgust. He carried the glass back and placed it inside of Murphy's pig pen, so that in the morning Mr. Murphy, with his confused and banquet-blurred eyes, saw two Chester white pigs where there was but one the night before.

The officials of the road made an effort to solve the mystery of the phantom engine in Hiner's Cut, and Pat Flynn was pressed for explanation and theories, and was asked to exercise special surveillance.

"This is a very strange and puzzling affair," said the Superintendent to Pat, "and we shall feel relieved to find a satisfactory explanation."

"It is a great mystery," said Pat with long breath. "It sure is." But when Pat had sufficiently figured it out that he himself had unwittingly been the cause of it, he heaped fresh curses upon the head of Murphy for buying such luxuriant furnishings as a five-foot mirror, and became a stanch supporter of the ghost theory as explaining the phantom headlight.

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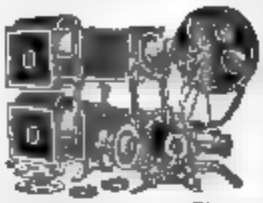

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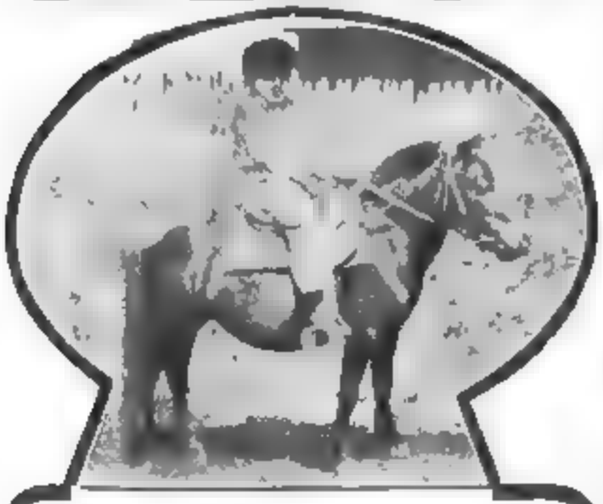

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Frederick C. Gladden, New York, "The Reduction of Singleton Worth"
Emmet F. Harte, Missouri, "In the Interest of Science"
John K. Turner, California, "The Form of the Unseen Hands"

② Adventure Stories

A single story only of those received was deemed "best," and the same is so exceptionally fine that $200 instead of $150 was paid to

C. Stephen Bradd, Massachusetts, for "Nathan"

③ Other Stories

Ten stories, instead of five, were judged best and of equal merit. Instead of dividing $1,000, the sum was increased to $1,250, and $125 was paid for each of the following ten stories. All the writers assented to this decision.

Lieut. Edwin J. Brucken, Wisconsin, "Jacob Schultz, Recruit"
Jack Browning, Utah, "The Game on the Lonesome Road"
James Francis Dwyer, New York, "The Peculiar Affair of John Huggin"
Mrs. Florence M. Eastland, Washington, "A Hired Gallant"
B. E. Fox, Massachusetts, "A Random Influence"
Clifford Howard, California, "A Light in the Desert"
Frederick F. Moore, California, "The Haunted Pesos."
Frederick F. Moore, California, "The Taming of 'Mister' McGraw"
Mrs. Rose Mills Powers, New York, "The Goddess of the Sea"
Albert W. Tolman, Maine, "The Quest of the Signet"

In addition to the above $2,050, the sum of $1,000 was awarded to the following writers whose twenty-two stories, while failing to win prizes, were found available for purchase. Dr. A. F. Bonney, Iowa; Edward Calnon, Michigan; William T. Eldridge, New York; Bradley Gilman, Massachusetts; R. Guthrie Kelly, Illinois; Greig Lapham, Michigan; Walter May, Illinois; Alfred D. Runyon, Colorado; George Saint-Amour, Texas; Robert Sloss, New York; Mrs. Anna H. Southworth, Massachusetts; Mabel Loder Stearns, Massachusetts; Frank H. Sweet, Virginia; Harry Van Demark, Texas; Mark F. Wilcox, Missouri; James Francis Dwyer, New York.

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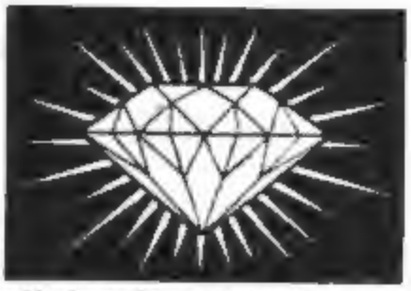

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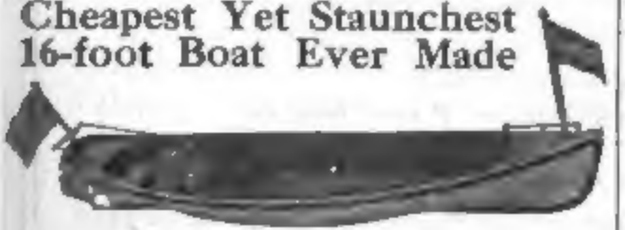

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BUY THEM FROM YOUR DEALER

25c per pair; 6 pairs in box for $1.50. Sizes, 9 to 11½ inclusive. If your dealer will not supply you, we will fill your order on receipt of price, prepaid to any point in U. S. Mention size desired.

Our beautiful catalog gives useful and valuable stocking information showing styles and prices. Write for it to-day.

SHAW STOCKING CO.

91 Shaw Street - Lowell, Mass

Style 5P1
This style 5P1 is light weight Style 35P1 is extra light weight
White yarn inside Cleanliness and Comfort
Double thickness in toe gives wear and durability
Black yarn outside Soft and pleasing combination
Gusset here adds room over instep
Double thickness in heel. Holes from chafing prevented

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This famous Hotel is most centrally located, convenient to all the life and business of the Metropolis.

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THE GILSEY HOUSE has been refitted and refurnished. Rooms range from $1.00 per day up.

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QUILTED MATTRESS PADS

MONEY spent wisely means comfort and pleasure to the spender. You go to bed to rest. Quilted Mattress Pads will make your bed comfortable as well as keep yours and baby's bed in a perfect sanitary condition.

The cost is small — and when washed they are as good as new.

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BORATED TALCUM TOILET POWDER

"Baby's Best Friend"

and Mamma's greatest comfort. Mennen's relieves and prevents Chafing, Sunburn, Prickly Heat and Chapping.

For your protection the genuine is put up in non-refillable boxes—the "Box that Lox," with Mennen's face on top. Sold everywhere or by mail 25 cents. *Sample Free.*

Try Mennen's Violet (Borated) Talcum Toilet Powder—it has the scent of Fresh-cut Parma Violets. *Sample Free.*

GERHARD MENNEN CO., Newark, N. J.

Mennen's Sen Sang Toilet Powder, Oriental odor } *No Samples*
Mennen's Borated Skin Soap (blue wrapper) }
Specially prepared for the nursery.

STYLE
NEATNESS
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BOSTON GARTER

The Name is stamped on every loop—Be sure it's there

THE Velvet Grip CUSHION BUTTON CLASP

LIES FLAT TO THE LEG—NEVER SLIPS, TEARS, NOR UNFASTENS

WORN ALL OVER THE WORLD

Sample pair, Silk 50c., Cotton 25c. Mailed on receipt of price.

GEORGE FROST CO., Makers
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INSIST ON HAVING THE GENUINE
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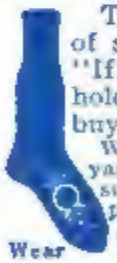

This guarantee comes in each box of six pairs of "Holeproof" Sox. "If any or all of these sox come to holes in six months from the day you buy them we will replace them free."

We pay an average of 73c pound for our yarns. We could pay 35c as others do. But such yarn is weak and harsh. "Holeproof" are soft, thin, cool—the original guaranteed sox. No others are so well made. Learn what a comfort they are.

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If your dealer does not have sox bearing the "Holeproof" Trade-mark, order direct from us. Remit in any convenient way.

Holeproof Sox 6 pairs, $2. Medium, light, and extra light weight for midsummer wear. Black, light and dark tan, navy blue and pearl gray. Sizes, 9½ to 12. Six pairs of a size and weight in a box. One color or assorted to order.

Holeproof Stockings 4 pairs, $2. Medium weight. Black, tan, and black with white foot. Sizes, 8 to 11.

Holeproof Lustre-Sox Finished like silk. 6 pairs, $3. Extra light weight. Black, navy blue, Burgundy red, light and and dark tan and pearl gray. Sizes, 9½ to 12.

Holeproof Lustre-Stockings Finished like silk. 4 pairs, $3. Extra light weight. Tan and black. Sizes, 8 to 11.

Reg. U. S. Pat. Office, 1906

Holeproof Hosiery Co., 144 Fourth St., Milwaukee